

THE
ILIAD OF HOMER.

RENDERED INTO ENGLISH BLANK VERSE.

BY
EDWARD EARL OF DERBY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



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TO

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

HERBERT EDWARD PRINCE OF WALES, K.G.

Ac. Ac. Ac.

THIS TRANSLATION OF

THE ILIAD OF HOMER

IS BY HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS'S GRACIOUS PERMISSION

WITH PROFOUND RESPECT AND DUTIFUL ATTACHMENT

HUMBLY DEDICATED.

P R E F A C E.

IN the spring of 1862 I was induced, at the request of some personal friends, to print, for private circulation only, a small volume of "Translations of Poems Ancient and Modern," in which was included the first Book of the *Iliad*. The opinions expressed by some competent judges of the degree of success which had attended this "attempt to infuse into an almost literal English version something of the spirit, as well as the simplicity, of the great original,"* were sufficiently favourable to encourage me to continue the work which I had begun. It has afforded me, in the intervals of more urgent business, an unfailing, and constantly increasing source of interest; and it is not without a feeling of regret at the completion of my task, and a sincere diffidence as to its success, that I venture to submit the result of my labours to the ordeal of public criticism.

Various causes, irrespective of any demerits of the work itself, forbid me to anticipate for this translation

* Introduction to unpublished volume.

any extensive popularity. First, I fear that the taste for, and appreciation of, Classical Literature are greatly on the decline; next, those who have kept up their classical studies, and are able to read and enjoy the original, will hardly take an interest in a mere translation; while the English reader, unacquainted with Greek, will naturally prefer the harmonious versification and polished brilliancy of Pope's translation; with which, as a happy adaptation of the Homeric story to the spirit of English poetry, I have not the presumption to enter into competition. But, admirable as it is, Pope's *Iliad* can hardly be said to be Homer's *Iliad*; and there may be some who, having lost the familiarity with the original language which they once possessed, may, if I have at all succeeded in my attempt, have recalled to their minds a faint echo of the strains which delighted their earlier days, and may recognize some slight trace of the original perfume.

Numerous as have been the translators of the *Iliad*, or of parts of it, the metres which have been selected have been almost as various: the ordinary couplet in rhyme, the Spenserian stanza, the Trochaic or Ballad metre, all have had their partisans, even to that "pestilent heresy" of the so-called English Hexameter; a metre wholly repugnant to the genius of our language; which can only be pressed into the service by a viola-

tion of every rule of prosody ; and of which, notwithstanding my respect for the eminent men who have attempted to naturalize it, I could never read ten lines without being irresistibly reminded of Canning's

“Dactyls call'st thou them ? God help thee, silly one !”

But in the progress of this work, I have been more and more confirmed in the opinion which I expressed at its commencement, that (whatever may be the extent of my own individual failure) “if justice is ever to be done to the easy flow and majestic simplicity of the grand old Poet, it can only be in the Heroic blank verse.” I have seen isolated passages admirably rendered in other metres ; and there are many instances in which a translation line for line and couplet for couplet naturally suggests itself, and in which it is sometimes difficult to avoid an involuntary rhyme ; but the blank verse appears to me the only metre capable of adapting itself to all the gradations, if I may use the term, of the Homeric style ; from the finished poetry of the numerous similes, in which every touch is nature, and nothing is overcoloured or exaggerated, down to the simple, almost homely, style of some portions of the narrative. Least of all can any other metre do full justice to the spirit and freedom of the various speeches, in which the old warriors give utterance, without dis-

guise or restraint, to all their strong and genuine emotions. To subject these to the trammels of couplet and rhyme would be as destructive of their chief characteristics, as the application of a similar process to the *Paradise Lost* of Milton, or the tragedies of Shakespeare; the effect indeed may be seen by comparing, with some of the noblest speeches of the latter, the few couplets which he seems to have considered himself bound by custom to tack on to their close, at the end of a scene or an act.

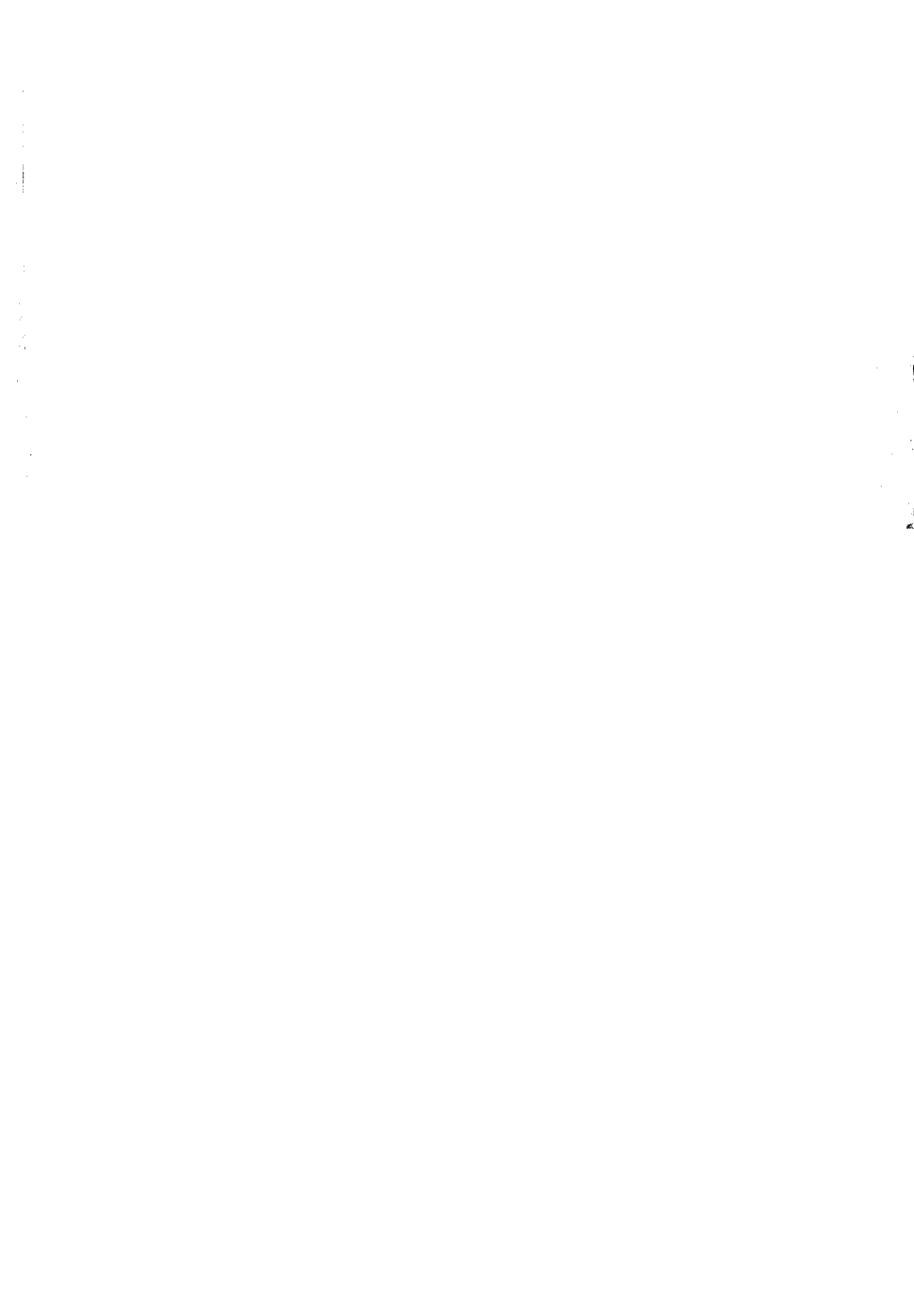
I have adopted, not without hesitation, the Latin, rather than the Greek, nomenclature for the Heathen Deities. I have been induced to do so from the manifest incongruity of confounding the two; and from the fact that though English readers may be familiar with the names of Zeus, or Aphrodite, or even Poseidon, those of Hera, or Ares, or Hephæstus, or Leto, would hardly convey to them a definite signification.

It has been my aim throughout to produce a translation, and not a paraphrase; not indeed such a translation as would satisfy, with regard to each word, the rigid requirements of accurate scholarship; but such as would fairly and honestly give the sense and spirit of every passage, and of every line; omitting nothing, and expanding nothing; and adhering, as closely as our language will allow, even to every epithet which is

capable of being translated, and which has, in the particular passage, anything of a special and distinctive character. Of the many deficiencies in my execution of this intention, I am but too conscious; whether I have been in any degree successful, must be left to the impartial decision of such of the Public as may honour this work with their perusal.

D.

KNOWSLEY, OCT., 1864.



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HOMER'S ILIAD.

BOOK I.

OF Peleus' son, Achilles, sing, O Muse,
The vengeance, deep and deadly; whence to Greece
Unnumber'd ills arose; which many a soul
Of mighty warriors to the viewless shades
Untimely sent; they on the battle plain 5
Unburied lay, a prey to rav'ning dogs,
And carrion birds; but so had Jove decreed,
From that sad day when first in wordy war,
The mighty Agamemnon, King of men,
Confronted stood by Peleus' godlike son. 10

Say then, what God the fatal strife provok'd?
Jove's and Latona's son; he, fill'd with wrath
Against the King, with deadly pestilence
The camp afflicted,—and the people died,—
For Chryses' sake, his priest, whom Atreus' son 15

With scorn dismiss'd, when to the Grecian ships
He came, his captive daughter to redeem,
With costly ransom charg'd; and in his hand
The sacred fillet of his God he bore,
And golden staff; to all he sued, but chief 20
To Atreus' sons, twin captains of the host:
"Ye sons of Atreus, and ye well-greav'd Greeks,
May the great Gods, who on Olympus dwell,
Grant you yon hostile city to destroy,
And home return in safety; but my child 25
Restore, I pray; her proffer'd ransom take,
And in his priest, the Lord of light revere."

Then through the ranks assenting murmurs ran,
The priest to rev'rence, and the ransom take:
Not so Atrides; he, with haughty mien, 30
And bitter speech, the trembling sire address'd:
"Old man, I warn thee, that beside our ships
I find thee not, or ling'ring now, or back
Returning; lest thou prove of small avail
Thy golden staff, and fillet of thy God. 35
Her I release not, till her youth be fled;
Within my walls, in Argos, far from home,

Her lot is cast, domestic cares to ply,
And share a master's bed. For thee, begone!

Incense me not, lest ill betide thee now." 40

He said: the old man trembled, and obey'd;
Beside the many-dashing Ocean's shore
Silent he pass'd; and all apart, he pray'd
To great Apollo, fair Latona's son:

"Hear me, God of the silver bow! whose care 45

Chrysa surrounds, and Cilla's lovely vale;

Whose sov'reign sway o'er Tenedos extends;

O Smintheus, hear! if e'er my offer'd gifts

Found favour in thy sight; if e'er to thee

I burn'd the fat of bulls and choicest goats, 50

Grant me this boon—upon the Grecian host

Let thine unerring darts avenge my tears."

Thus as he pray'd, his pray'r Apollo heard:

Along Olympus' heights he pass'd, his heart

Burning with wrath; behind his shoulders hung 55

His bow, and ample quiver; at his back

Rattled the fateful arrows as he mov'd;

Like the night-cloud he pass'd; and from afar

He bent against the ships, and sped the bolt;

And fierce and deadly twang'd the silver bow. 60
First on the mules and dogs, on man the last,
Was pour'd the arrowy storm; and through the camp,
Constant and num'rous, blaz'd the fun'ral fires.

Nine days the heav'nly Archer on the troops
Hurl'd his dread shafts; the tenth, th' assembled Greeks 65
Achilles call'd to council; so inspir'd
By Juno, white-arm'd Goddess, who beheld
With pitying eyes the wasting hosts of Greece.
When all were met, and closely throng'd around,
Rose the swift-footed chief, and thus began: 70

"Ye sons of Atreus, to my mind there seems,
If we would 'scape from death, one only course,
Home to retrace our steps: since here at once
By war and pestilence our forces waste.
But seek we first some prophet, or some priest, 75
Or some wise vision-seer (since visions too
From Jove proceed), who may the cause explain,
Which with such deadly wrath Apollo fires:
If for neglected hecatombs or pray'rs
He blame us; or if fat of lambs and goats 80
May soothe his anger and the plague assuage."

This said, he sat; and Thestor's son arose,
Calchas, the chief of seers, to whom were known
The present, and the future, and the past;
Who, by his mystic art, Apollo's gift, 85
Guided to Ilium's shore the Grecian fleet.
Who thus with cautious speech replied, and said:
"Achilles, lov'd of Heav'n, thou bidd'st me say
Why thus incens'd the far-destroying King:
Therefore I speak; but promise thou, and swear, 90
By word and hand, to bear me harmless through.
For well I know my speech must one offend,
One mighty chief, whom all our hosts obey;
And terrible to men of low estate
The anger of a King; for though awhile 95
He veil his wrath, yet in his bosom pent
It still is nurs'd, until the time arrive;
Say, then, wilt thou protect me, if I speak?"

Him answer'd thus Achilles, swift of foot:
"Speak boldly out whate'er thine art can tell; 100
For by Apollo's self I swear, whom thou,
O Calchas, serv'st, and who thy words inspires,
That, while I live, and see the light of Heav'n,

Not one of all the Greeks shall dare on thee,
Beside our ships, injurious hands to lay: 105
No, not if Agamemnon's self were he,
Who 'mid our warriors boasts the foremost place."

Embolden'd thus, th' unerring prophet spoke:
"Not for neglected hecatombs or pray'rs,
But for his priest, whom Agamemnon scorn'd, 110
Nor took his ransom, nor his child restor'd;
On his account the Far-destroyer sends
This scourge of pestilence, and yet will send;
Nor shall we cease his heavy hand to feel,
Till to her sire we give the bright-ey'd girl, 115
Unbought, unransom'd, and to Chrysa's shore
A solemn hecatomb despatch; this done,
The God, appeas'd, his anger may remit."

This said, he sat; and Atreus' godlike son,
The mighty monarch, Agamemnon, rose, 120
His dark soul fill'd with fury, and his eyes
Flashing like flames of fire; on Calchas first
A with'ring glance he cast, and thus he spoke:

"Prophet of ill! thou never speak'st to me
But words of evil omen; for thy soul 125

Delights to augur ill, but aught of good
Thou never yet hast promis'd, nor perform'd.
And now among the Greeks thou spread'st abroad
Thy lying prophecies, that all these ills
Come from the Far-destroyer, for that I 130
Refus'd the ransom of my lovely prize,
And that I rather chose herself to keep,
To me not less than Clytemnestra dear,
My virgin-wedded wife; nor less adorn'd
In gifts of form, of feature, or of mind. 135
Yet, if it must be so, I give her back;
I wish my people's safety, not their death.
But seek me out forthwith some other spoil,
Lest empty-handed I alone appear
Of all the Greeks; for this would ill beseem; 140
And how I lose my present share, ye see."

To whom Achilles, swift of foot, replied:
"Haughtiest of men, and greediest of the prey!
How shall our valiant Greeks for thee seek out
Some other spoil? no common fund have we 145
Of hoarded treasures; what our arms have won
From captur'd towns, has been already shar'd,

Nor can we now resume th' apportion'd spoil.
Restore the maid, obedient to the God!
And if Heav'n will that we the strong-built walls 150
Of Troy should raze, our warriors will to thee
A threefold, fourfold recompense assign."

To whom great Agamemnon thus replied:
"Think not, Achilles, valiant though thou art
In fight, and godlike, to defraud me thus; 155
Thou shalt not so persuade me, nor o'erreach.
Think'st thou to keep thy portion of the spoil,
While I with empty hands sit humbly down?
The bright-ey'd girl thou bidd'st me to restore;
If then the valiant Greeks for me seek out 160
Some other spoil, some compensation just,
'Tis well: if not, I with my own right hand
Will from some other chief, from thee perchance,
Or Ajax, or Ulysses, wrest his prey;
And woe to him, on whomsoe'er I call! 165
But this for future counsel we remit:
Haste we then now our dark-ribb'd bark to launch,
Muster a fitting crew, and place on board
The sacred hecatomb; then last embark

The fair Chryseis; and in chief command 170

Let some one of our councillors be plac'd,

Ajax, Ulysses, or Idomeneus,

Or thou, the most ambitious of them all,

That so our rites may soothe the angry God."

To whom Achilles thus with scornful glance: 175

"Oh, cloth'd in shamelessness! oh, sordid soul!

How canst thou hope that any Greek for thee

Will brave the toils of travel or of war?

Well dost thou know that 't was no feud of mine

With Troy's brave sons that brought me here in arms; 180

They never did me wrong; they never drove

My cattle, or my horses; never sought

In Phthia's fertile, life-sustaining fields

To waste the crops; for wide between us lay

The shadowy mountains and the roaring sea. 185

With thee, O void of shame! with thee we sail'd,

For Meneläus and for thee, ingrate,

Glory and fame on Trojan crests to win.

All this hast thou forgotten, or despis'd;

And threat'nest now to wrest from me the prize 190

I labour'd hard to win, and Greeks bestow'd.

Nor does my portion ever equal thine,
When on some populous town our troops have made
Successful war; in the contentious fight
The larger portion of the toil is mine; 195
But when the day of distribution comes,
Thine is the richest spoil; while I, forsooth,
Must be too well content to bear on board
Some paltry prize for all my warlike toil.
To Phthia now I go; so better far, 200
To steer my homeward course, and leave thee here
Dishonour'd as thou art, nor like, I deem,
To fill thy coffers with the spoils of war."

Whom answer'd Agamemnon, King of men:
"Fly then, if such thy mind! I ask thee not 205
On mine account to stay; others there are
Will guard my honour and avenge my cause:
And chief of all, the Lord of counsel, Jove!
Of all the Heav'n-born Kings, thou art the man
I hate the most; for thou delight'st in nought 210
But war and strife: thy prowess I allow;
Yet this, remember, is the gift of Heav'n.
Return then, with thy vessels, if thou wilt,

And with thy followers, home; and lord it there
Over thy Myrmidons! I heed thee not! 215
I care not for thy fury! Hear my threat:
Since Phœbus wrests Chryseis from my arms,
In mine own ship, and with mine own good crew,
Her I send forth; and, in her stead, I mean,
Ev'n from thy tent, myself, to bear thy prize, 220
The fair Briseis; that henceforth thou know
How far I am thy master; and that, taught
By thine example, others too may fear
To rival me, and brave me to my face."

Thus while he spake, Achilles chaf'd with rage; 225
And in his manly breast his heart was torn
With thoughts conflicting—whether from his side
To draw his mighty sword, and put to rout
Th' assembled throng, and kill th' insulting King;
Or school his soul, and keep his anger down. 230
But while in mind and spirit thus he mus'd,
And half unsheath'd his sword, from Heav'n came down
Minerva, sent by Juno, white-arm'd Queen,
Whose love and care both chiefs alike enjoy'd.
She stood behind, and by the yellow hair 235

She held the son of Peleus, visible
To him alone, by all the rest unseen.
Achilles, wond'ring, turn'd, and straight he knew
The blue-ey'd Pallas; awful was her glance;
Whom thus the chief with wingèd words address'd: 240
 " Why com'st thou, child of ægis-bearing Jove?
To see the arrogance of Atreus' son?
But this I say, and will make good my words,
This insolence may cost him soon his life."

 To whom the blue-ey'd Goddess thus replied: 245
" From Heav'n I came, to curb, if thou wilt hear,
Thy fury; sent by Juno, white-arm'd Queen,
Whose love and care ye both alike enjoy.
Cease, then, these broils, and draw not thus thy sword;
In words, indeed, assail him as thou wilt. 250
But this I promise, and will make it good,
The time shall come, when for this insolence
A threefold compensation shall be thine;
Only be sway'd by me, and curb thy wrath."

 Whom answer'd thus Achilles, swift of foot: 255
" Goddess, I needs must yield to your commands,
Indignant though I be—for so 'tis best;

Who hears the Gods, of them his pray'rs are heard."

He said; and on the silver hilt he stay'd
His pow'rful hand, and flung his mighty sword 260
Back to its scabbard, to Minerva's word
Obedient: she her heav'nward course pursued
To join th' Immortals in th' abode of Jove.
But Peleus' son, with undiminish'd wrath,
Atrides thus with bitter words address'd: 265

"Thou sot, with eye of dog, and heart of deer!
Who never dar'st to lead in armèd fight
Th' assembled host, nor with a chosen few
To man the secret ambush—for thou fear'st 270
To look on death—no doubt 'tis easier far,
Girt with thy troops, to plunder of his right
Whoe'er may venture to oppose thy will!
A tyrant King, because thou rul'st o'er slaves!
Were it not so, this insult were thy last.
But this I say, and with an oath confirm, 275
By this my royal staff, which never more
Shall put forth leaf nor spray, since first it left
Upon the mountain-side its parent stem,
Nor blossom more; since all around the axe

Hath lopp'd both leaf and bark, and now 'tis borne 280

Emblem of justice, by the sons of Greece,

Who guard the sacred ministry of law

Before the face of Jove! a mighty oath!

The time shall come, when all the sons of Greece

Shall mourn Achilles' loss; and thou the while, 285

Heart-rent, shalt be all-impotent to aid,

When by the warrior-slayer Hector's hand

Many shall fall; and then thy soul shall mourn

The slight on Grecia's bravest warrior cast."

Thus spoke Pelides; and upon the ground 290

He cast his staff, with golden studs emboss'd,

And took his seat; on th' other side, in wrath,

Atrides burn'd; but Nestor interpos'd;

Nestor, the leader of the Pylia host,

The smooth-tongued chief, from whose persuasive lips 295

Sweeter than honey flow'd the stream of speech.

Two generations of the sons of men

For him were past and gone, who with himself

Were born and bred on Pylos' lovely shore,

And o'er the third he now held royal sway. 300

He thus with prudent words the chiefs address'd:

“Alas, alas! what grief is this for Greece!
What joy for Priam, and for Priam's sons!
What exultation for the men of Troy,
To hear of feuds 'tween you, of all the Greeks 305
The first in council, and the first in fight!
Yet, hear my words, I pray; in years, at least,
Ye both must yield to me; and in times past
I liv'd with men, and they despis'd me not,
Ablar in counsel, greater than yourselves. 310
Such men I never saw, and ne'er shall see,
As Pirithous and Dryas, wise and brave,
Cœneus, Exadius, godlike Polypheme,
And Theseus, Ægeus' more than mortal son.
The mightiest they among the sons of men; 315
The mightiest they, and of the forest beasts
Strove with the mightiest, and their rage subdued.
With them from distant lands, from Pylos' shore
I join'd my forces, and their call obey'd;
With them I play'd my part; with them, not one 320
Would dare to fight of mortals now on earth.
Yet they my counsels heard, my voice obey'd;
And hear ye also, for my words are wise.

Nor thou, though great thou be, attempt to rob
Achilles of his prize, but let him keep 325
The spoil assign'd him by the sons of Greece;
Nor thou, Pelides, with the monarch strive
In rivalry; for ne'er to sceptred King
Hath Jove such pow'rs, as to Atrides, giv'n;
And valiant though thou art, and Goddess-born, 330
Yet mightier he, for wider is his sway.
Atrides, curb thy wrath! while I beseech
Achilles to forbear; in whom the Greeks
From adverse war their great defender see."

To whom the monarch, Agamemnon, thus: 335
"O father, full of wisdom are thy words;
But this proud chief o'er all would domineer;
O'er all he seeks to rule, o'er all to reign,
To all to dictate; which I will not bear.
Grant that the Gods have giv'n him warlike might, 340
Gave they unbridled license to his tongue?"

To whom Achilles, interrupting, thus:
"Coward and slave indeed I might be deem'd,
Could I submit to make thy word my law;
To others thy commands; seek not to me 345

To dictate, for I follow thee no more.

But hear me speak, and ponder what I say:

For the fair girl I fight not (since you choose

To take away the prize yourselves bestow'd)

With thee or any one; but of the rest 350

My dark swift ship contains, against my will

On nought shalt thou, unpunish'd, lay thy hand.

Make trial if thou wilt, that these may know;

Thy life-blood soon should reek upon my spear."

After this conflict keen of angry speech, 355

The chiefs arose, and broke the council up.

With his own followers, and Menœtius' son,
Achilles to his tents and ships withdrew.

But Atreus' son launch'd a swift-sailing bark,

With twenty rowers mann'd, and plac'd on board 360

The sacred hecatomb; then last embark'd

The fair Chryseis, and in chief command

Laertes' son, the sage Ulysses, plac'd.

They swiftly sped along the wat'ry way.

Next, proclamation through the camp was made 365

To purify the host; and in the sea,

Obedient to the word, they purified;

Then to Apollo solemn rites perform'd
With faultless hecatombs of bulls and goats,
Upon the margin of the wat'ry waste; 370
And, wreath'd in smoke, the savour rose to Heav'n.

The camp thus occupied, the King pursued
His threaten'd plan of vengeance; to his side
Calling Talthybius and Eurybates,
Heralds, and faithful followers, thus he spoke: 375

"Haste to Achilles' tent, and in your hand
Back with you thence the fair Briseis bring:
If he refuse to send her, I myself
With a sufficient force will bear her thence,
Which he may find, perchance, the worse for him." 380

So spake the monarch, and with stern command
Dismiss'd them; with reluctant steps they pass'd
Along the margin of the wat'ry waste,
Till to the tents and ships they came, where lay
The warlike Myrmidons. Their chief they found 385
Sitting beside his tent and dark-ribb'd ship.
Achilles mark'd their coming, not well pleas'd:
With troubled mien, and awe-struck by the King,
They stood, nor dar'd accost him; but himself

Divin'd their errand, and address'd them thus : 390

“ Welcome, ye messengers of Gods and men,
Heralds ! approach in safety ; not with you,
But with Atrides, is my just offence,
Who for the fair Briseis sends you here.

Go, then, Patroclus, bring the maiden forth, 395

And give her to their hands ; but witness ye,
Before the blessed Gods and mortal men,
And to the face of that injurious King,
When he shall need my arm, from shameful rout
To save his followers ; blinded by his rage, 400
He neither heeds experience of the past,
Nor scans the future, provident how best
To guard his fleet and army from the foe.”

He spoke : obedient to his friend and chief,
Patroclus led the fair Briseis forth, 405

And gave her to their hands ; they to the ships
Retrac'd their steps, and with them the fair girl
Reluctant went : meanwhile Achilles, plung'd
In bitter grief, from all the band apart,
Upon the margin of the hoary sea 410
Sat idly gazing on the dark-blue waves ;

And to his Goddess-mother long he pray'd,
With outstretch'd hands, "Oh, mother! since thy son
To early death by destiny is doom'd,
I might have hop'd the Thunderer on high, 415
Olympian Jove, with honour would have crown'd
My little space; but now disgrace is mine;
Since Agamemnon, the wide-ruling King,
Hath wrested from me, and still holds, my prize."

Weeping, he spoke; his Goddess-mother heard, 420
Beside her aged father where she sat
In the deep ocean-caves: ascending quick
Through the dark waves, like to a misty cloud,
Beside her son she stood; and as he wept,
She gently touch'd him with her hand, and said, 425
"Why weeps my son? and whence his cause of grief?
Speak out, that I may hear, and share thy pain."

To whom Achilles, swift of foot, replied,
Groaning, "Thou know'st; what boots to tell thee all?
On Thebes we march'd, Eëtion's sacred town, 430
And storm'd the walls, and hither bore the spoil.
The spoils were fairly by the sons of Greece
Apportion'd out; and to Atrides' share

The beauteous daughter of old Chryses fell.
Chryses, Apollo's priest, to free his child, 435
Came to th' encampment of the brass-clad Greeks,
With costly ransom charg'd; and in his hand
The sacred fillet of his God he bore,
And golden staff; to all he sued, but chief
To Atreus' sons, twin captains of the host. 440
Then through the ranks assenting murmurs ran,
The priest to rev'rence, and the ransom take:
Not so Atrides; he, with haughty mien
And bitter words, the trembling sire dismiss'd.
The old man turn'd in sorrow; but his pray'r 445
Phœbus Apollo heard, who lov'd him well.
Against the Greeks he bent his fatal bow,
And fast the people fell; on ev'ry side
Throughout the camp the heav'nly arrows flew;
A skilful seer at length the cause reveal'd 450
Which thus incens'd the Archer-God; I then,
The first, gave counsel to appease his wrath.
Whereat Atrides, full of fury, rose,
And utter'd threats, which he hath now fulfill'd.
For Chryses' daughter to her native land 455

In a swift-sailing ship the keen-ey'd Greeks
Have sent, with costly off'rings to the God:
But her, assign'd me by the sons of Greece,
Brises' fair daughter, from my tent e'en now
The heralds bear away. Then, Goddess, thou, 460
If thou hast pow'r, protect thine injur'd son.
Fly to Olympus, to the feet of Jove,
And make thy pray'r to him, if on his heart
Thou hast in truth, by word or deed, a claim.
For I remember, in my father's house, 465
I oft have heard thee boast, how thou, alone
Of all th' Immortals, Saturn's cloud-girt son
Didst shield from foul disgrace, when all the rest,
Juno, and Neptune, and Minerva join'd,
With chains to bind him; then, O Goddess, thou 470
Didst set him free, invoking to his aid
Him of the hundred arms, whom Briareus
Th' immortal Gods, and men Ægeon call.
He, mightier than his father, took his seat
By Saturn's son, in pride of conscious strength: 475
Fear seiz'd on all the Gods, nor did they dare
To bind their King: of this remind him now,

And clasp his knees, and supplicate his aid
For Troy's brave warriors, that the routed Greeks
Back to their ships with slaughter may be driv'n; 480
That all may taste the folly of their King,
And Agamemnon's haughty self may mourn
The slight on Grecia's bravest warrior cast."

Thus he; and Thetis, weeping, thus replied:
"Alas, my child, that e'er I gave thee birth! 485
Would that beside thy ships thou couldst remain
From grief exempt, and insult! since by fate
Few years are thine, and not a lengthen'd term;
At once to early death and sorrows doom'd
Beyond the lot of man! in evil hour 490
I gave thee birth! But to the snow-clad heights
Of great Olympus, to the throne of Jove,
Who wields the thunder, thy complaints I bear.
Thou by thy ships, meanwhile, against the Greeks
Thine anger nurse, and from the fight abstain. 495
For Jove is to a solemn banquet gone
Beyond the sea, on Æthiopia's shore,
Since yesternight; and with him all the Gods.
On the twelfth day he purpos'd to return

To high Olympus; thither then will I, 500
And at his feet my supplication make;
And he, I think, will not deny my suit."

This said, she disappear'd; and left him there
Musing in anger on the lovely form
Torn from his arms by violence away. 505

Meantime, Ulysses, with his sacred freight,
Arriv'd at Chrysa's strand; and when his bark
Had reach'd the shelter of the deep sea bay,
Their sails they furl'd, and lower'd to the hold;
Slack'd the retaining shrouds, and quickly struck 510
And stow'd away the mast; then with their sweeps
Pull'd for the beach, and cast their anchors out,
And made her fast with cables to the shore.

Then on the shingly breakwater themselves
They landed, and the sacred hecatomb 515
To great Apollo; and Chryseis last.

Her to the altar straight Ulysses led,
The wise in counsel; in her father's hand
He plac'd the maiden, and address'd him thus:
"Chryses, from Agamemnon, King of men, 520
To thee I come, thy daughter to restore;

And to thy God, upon the Greeks' behalf,
To offer sacrifice, if haply so
We may appease his wrath, who now incens'd
With grievous suff'ring visits all our host." 525
Then to her sire he gave her; he with joy
Receiv'd his child; the sacred hecatomb
Around the well-built altar for the God
In order due they plac'd; their hands then wash'd,
And the salt cake prepar'd, before them all 530
With hands uplifted Chryses pray'd aloud:

“Hear me, God of the silver bow! whose care
Chrysa surrounds, and Cilla's lovely vale,
Whose sov'reign sway o'er Tenedos extends!
Once hast thou heard my pray'r, aveng'd my cause, 535
And pour'd thy fury on the Grecian host.
Hear yet again, and grant what now I ask;
Withdraw thy chast'ning hand, and stay the plague.”

Thus, as he pray'd, his pray'r Apollo heard.
Their pray'rs concluded, and the salt cake strew'd 540
Upon the victims' heads, they drew them back,
And slew, and flay'd; then cutting from the thighs
The choicest pieces, and in double layers

O'erspreading them with fat, above them plac'd
The due meat-off'rings; then the aged priest 545
The cleft wood kindled, and libations pour'd
Of ruddy wine; arm'd with the five-fork'd prongs
Th' attendant ministers beside him stood.
The thighs consum'd with fire, the inward parts
They tasted first; the rest upon the spits 550
Roasted with care, and from the fire withdrew.
Their labours ended, and the feast prepar'd,
They shar'd the social meal, nor lack'd there aught.
The rage of thirst and hunger satisfied,
Th' attendant youths the flowing goblets crown'd, 555
And in fit order serv'd the cups to all.
All day they sought the favour of the God,
The glorious pæans chanting, and the praise
Of Phœbus: he, well pleas'd, the strain receiv'd.
But when the sun was set, and shades of night 560
O'erspread the sky, upon the sandy beach
Close to their ship they laid them down to rest.
And when the rosy-finger'd morn appear'd,
Back to the camp they took their homeward way.
A fav'ring breeze the Far-destroyer sent: 565

They stepp'd the mast, and spread the snowy sail:
Full in the midst the bellying sail receiv'd
The gallant breeze; and round the vessel's prow
The dark waves loudly roar'd, as on she rush'd
Skimming the seas, and cut her wat'ry way. 570

Arriv'd where lay the wide-spread host of Greece,
Their dark-ribb'd vessel on the beach they drew
High on the sand, and strongly shor'd her up;
Then through the camp they took their sev'ral ways.

Meantime, beside the ships Achilles sat, 575
The Heav'n-born son of Peleus, swift of foot,
Chafing with rage repress'd; no more he sought
The honour'd council, nor the battle-field;
But wore his soul away, and inly pin'd
For the fierce joy and tumult of the fight. 580

But when the twelfth revolving day was come,
Back to Olympus' heights th' immortal Gods,
Jove at their head, together all return'd.
Then Thetis, mindful of her son's request,
Rose from the ocean wave, and sped in haste 585
To high Olympus, and the courts of Heav'n.
Th' all-seeing son of Saturn there she found

Sitting apart upon the topmost crest
Of many-ridg'd Olympus; at his feet
She sat, and while her left hand clasp'd his knees, 590
Her right approach'd his beard, and suppliant thus
She made her pray'r to Saturn's royal son:

“Father, if e'er amid th' immortal Gods
By word or deed I did thee service true,
Hear now my pray'r! Avenge my hapless son, 595
Of mortals shortest-liv'd, insulted now
By mighty Agamemnon, King of men,
And plunder'd of his lawful spoils of war.
But Jove, Olympian, Lord of counsel, Thou
Avenge his cause; and give to Trojan arms 600
Such strength and pow'r, that Greeks may learn how much
They need my son, and give him honour due.”

She said: the Cloud-compeller answer'd not,
But silent sat; then Thetis clasp'd his knees,
And hung about him, and her suit renew'd: 605

“Give me thy promise sure, thy gracious nod,
Or else refuse (for thou hast none to fear),
That I may learn, of all th' immortal Gods,
How far I stand the lowest in thine eyes.”

Then, much disturb'd, the Cloud-compeller spoke : 610
" Sad work thou mak'st, in bidding me oppose
My will to Juno's, when her bitter words
Assail me ; for full oft amid the Gods
She taunts me, that I aid the Trojan cause.
But thou return, that Juno see thee not, 615
And leave to me the furth'rance of thy suit.
Lo, to confirm thy faith, I nod my head ;
And well among th' immortal Gods is known
The solemn import of that pledge from me :
For ne'er my promise shall deceive, or fail, 620
Or be recall'd, if with a nod confirm'd."

He said, and nodded with his shadowy brows ;
Wav'd on th' immortal head th' ambrosial locks,
And all Olympus trembled at his nod.
They parted thus ; from bright Olympus' heights 625
The Goddess hasted to her ocean-caves,
Jove to his palace ; at his entrance all
Rose from their seats at once ; not one presum'd
To wait his coming, but advanc'd to meet.
Then on his throne he sat ; but not unmark'd 630
Of Juno's eye had been the council held

In secret with the silver-footed Queen,
The daughter of the aged Ocean-God;
And with sharp words she thus address'd her Lord:

“Tell me, deceiver, who was she with whom 635
Thou late held'st council? ever 'tis thy way
Apart from me to weave thy secret schemes,
Nor dost thou freely share with me thy mind.”

To whom the Sire of Gods and men replied:
“Expect not, Juno, all my mind to know; 640
My wife thou art, yet would such knowledge be
Too much for thee; whate'er I deem it fit
That thou shouldst know, nor God nor man shall hear
Before thee; but what I in secret plan,
Seek not to know, nor curiously enquire.” 645

Whom answer'd thus the stag-ey'd Queen of Heav'n:
“What words, dread son of Saturn, dost thou speak?
Ne'er have I sought, or now, or heretofore,
Thy secret thoughts to know; what thou think'st fit
To tell, I wait thy gracious will to hear. 650
Yet fear I in my soul thou art beguil'd
By wiles of Thetis, silver-footed Queen,
The daughter of the aged Ocean-God;

For she was with thee early, and embrac'd
Thy knees, and has, I think, thy promise sure, 655
Thou wilt avenge Achilles' cause, and bring
Destructive slaughter on the Greeian host."

To whom the Cloud-compeller thus replied :
" Presumptuous, to thy busy thoughts thou giv'st
Too free a range, and watchest all I do; 660
Yet shalt thou not prevail, but rather thus
Be alien'd from my heart—the worse for thee!
If this be so, it is my sov'reign will.
But, now, keep silence, and my words obey,
Lest all th' Immortals fail, if I be wroth, 665
To rescue thee from my resistless hand."

He said, and terror seiz'd the stag-cy'd Queen :
Silent she sat, curbing her spirit down,
And all the Gods in pitying sorrow mourn'd.
Vulcan, the skill'd artificer, then first 670
Broke silence, and with soothing words address'd
His mother, Juno, white-arm'd Queen of Heav'n :
" Sad were't, indeed, and grievous to be borne,
If for the sake of mortal men you two
Should suffer angry passions to arise, 675

And kinde broils in Heav'n; so should our feast
By evil influence all its sweetness lack.
Let me advise my mother (and I know
That her own reason will my words approve)
To speak my father fair; lest he again 680
Reply in anger, and our banquet mar.
Nay, though Olympian Jove, the lightning's Lord,
Should hurl us from our seats (for great his pow'r),
I yet should counsel gentle words, that so
We might propitiate best the King of Heav'n." 685

This said, he rose, and in his mother's hand
A double goblet plac'd, as thus he spoke:
"Have patience, mother mine! though much enforc'd,
Restrain thy spirit, lest perchance these eyes,
Dear as thou art, behold thee brought to shame; 690
And I, though griev'd in heart, be impotent
To save thee; for 'tis hard to strive with Jove.
When to thy succour once before I came,
He seiz'd me by the foot, and hurl'd me down
From Heav'n's high threshold; all the day I fell, 695
And with the setting sun, on Lemnos' isle
Lighted, scarce half alive; there was I found,

And by the Sintian people kindly nurs'd."

Thus as he spoke, the white-arm'd Goddess smil'd,
And, smiling, from his hand receiv'd the cup. 700
Then to th' Immortals all, in order due,
He minister'd, and from the flagon pour'd
The luscious nectar; while among the Gods
Rose laughter irrepressible, at sight
Of Vulcan hobbling round the spacious hall. 705

Thus they till sunset pass'd the festive hours;
Nor lack'd the banquet aught to please the sense,
Nor sound of tuneful lyre, by Phoebus touch'd,
Nor Muses' voice, who in alternate strains
Responsive sang: but when the sun had set, 710
Each to his home departed, where for each
The crippled Vulcan, matchless architect,
With wondrous skill a noble house had rear'd.

To his own couch, where he was wont of old,
When overcome by gentle sleep, to rest, 715
Olympian Jove ascended; there he slept,
And, by his side, the golden-thronèd Queen. 717

BOOK II.

ALL night in sleep repos'd the other Gods,
And helmèd warriors; but the eyes of Jove
Sweet slumber held not, pond'ring in his mind
How to avenge Achilles' cause, and pour
Destructive slaughter on the Grecian host.
Thus as he mus'd, the wisest course appear'd
By a deluding vision to mislead
The son of Atreus; and with wingèd words
Thus to a phantom form he gave command:
"Hie thee, deluding Vision, to the camp
And ships of Greece, to Agamemnon's tent;
There all, as I command thee, truly speak.
Bid that he arm in haste the long-hair'd Greeks
To combat; for the wide-built streets of Troy
He now may capture; since th' immortal Gods
Watch over her no longer; all are gain'd
By Juno's pray'rs; and woes impend o'er Troy."

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He said: the Vision heard, and straight obey'd:
Swiftly he sped, and reach'd the Grecian ships,
And sought the son of Atreus; him he found 20
Within his tent, wrapp'd in ambrosial sleep;
Above his head he stood, like Neleus' son,
Nestor, whom Agamemnon rev'renc'd most
Of all the Elders; in his likeness cloth'd
Thus spoke the heav'nly Vision; "Sleep'st thou, son 25
Of Atreus, valiant warrior, horseman bold?
To sleep all night but ill becomes a chief,
Charg'd with the public weal, and cares of state.
Hear now the words I bear; to thee I come
A messenger from Jove, who from on high 30
Looks down on thee with eyes of pitying love.
He bids thee arm in haste the long-hair'd Greeks
To combat; since the wide-built streets of Troy
Thou now mayst capture; for th' immortal Gods
Watch over her no longer; all are gain'd 35
By Juno's pray'rs; and woes impend o'er Troy.
Bear this in mind; and when from sleep arous'd
Let not my words from thy remembrance fade."
This said, he vanish'd; and the monarch left,

Inspir'd with thoughts which ne'er should come to pass. 40

For in that day he vainly hop'd to take

The town of Priam; ignorant what Jove

Design'd in secret, or what woes, what groans,

What lengthen'd labours in the stubborn fight,

Were yet for Trojans and for Greeks in store. 45

He woke from sleep; but circumfus'd around

The Vision linger'd still—he sat upright;

He donn'd his vest of texture fine, new-wrought,

Then o'er it threw his ample robe, and bound

His sandals fair around his well-turn'd feet; 50

And o'er his shoulders flung his sword, adorn'd

With silver studs; and bearing in his hand

His royal staff, ancestral, to the ships

Where lay the brass-clad warriors, bent his way.

Aurora now was rising up the steep 55

Of great Olympus, to th' immortal Gods

Pure light diffusing; when Atrides bade

The clear-voic'd heralds to th' Assembly call

The gen'ral host; they gave the word, and straight

From ev'ry quarter throng'd the eager crowd. 60

But first, of all the Elders, by the side

Of Nestor's ship, the aged Pylian chief,
A secret conclave Agamemnon call'd;
And, prudent, thus the chosen few address'd:
"Hear me, my friends! In the still hours of night 65
I saw a heav'nly Vision in my sleep:
Most like it seem'd in stature, form, and face
To rev'rend Nestor; at my head it stood,
And with these words address'd me—"Sleep'st thou, son
Of Atreus, valiant warrior, horseman bold? 70
To sleep all night but ill becomes a chief,
Charg'd with the public weal, and cares of state.
Hear now the words I bear; to thee I come
A messenger from Jove, who from on high
Looks down on thee with eyes of pitying love. 75
He bids thee arm in haste the long-hair'd Greeks
To combat; since the wide-built streets of Troy
Thou now mayst capture; for th' immortal Gods
Watch over her no longer; all are gain'd
By Juno's pray'rs, and woes impend o'er Troy. 80
Bear thou my words in mind.' Thus as he spoke
He vanish'd; and sweet sleep forsook mine eyes.
Seek we then straight to arm the sons of Greece:

But first, as is our wont, myself will prove
The spirit of the army; and suggest 85
Their homeward voyage; ye, throughout the camp
Restore their courage, and restrain from flight."

Thus having said, he sat; and next arose
Nestor, the chief of Pylos' sandy shore,
Who thus with prudent speech replied, and said: 90
"O friends, the chiefs and councillors of Greece,
If any other had this Vision seen,
We should have deem'd it false, and laugh'd to scorn
The idle tale; but now it hath appear'd,
Of all our army, to the foremost man: 95
Seek we then straight to arm the sons of Greece."

He said, and from the council led the way.
Uprose the sceptred monarchs, and obey'd
Their leader's call, and round them throng'd the crowd.
As swarms of bees, that pour in ceaseless stream 100
From out the crevice of some hollow rock,
Now clust'ring, and anon 'mid vernal flow'rs,
Some here, some there, in busy numbers fly;
So to th' Assembly from their tents and ships
The countless tribes came thronging; in their midst, 105

By Jove excited, Rumour urg'd them on.
Great was the din; and as the mighty mass
Sat down, the solid earth beneath them groan'd;
Nine heralds rais'd their voices loud, to quell
The storm of tongues, and bade the noisy crowd 110
Be still, and listen to the Heav'n-born Kings.
At length they all were seated, and awhile
Their clamours sank to silence; then uprose
The monarch Agamemnon, in his hand
His royal staff, the work of Vulcan's art; 115
Which Vulcan to the son of Saturn gave;
To Hermes he, the heav'nly messenger;
Hermes to Pelops, matchless charioteer;
Pelops to Atreus; Atreus at his death
Bequeath'd it to Thyestes, wealthy Lord 120
Of num'rous herds; to Agamemnon last
Thyestes left it; token of his sway
O'er all the Argive coast, and neighbouring isles.
On this the monarch leant, as thus he spoke:
"Friends, Grecian Heroes, Ministers of Mars! 125
Grievous, and all unlook'd for, is the blow
Which Jove hath dealt me; by his promise led

I hop'd to raze the strong-built walls of Troy,
And home return in safety; but it seems
He falsifies his word, and bids me now 130
Return to Argos, frustrate of my hope,
Dishonour'd, and with grievous loss of men.
Such now appears th' o'er-ruling sov'reign will
Of Saturn's son; who oft hath sunk the heads
Of many a lofty city in the dust, 135
And yet will sink; for mighty is his hand.
'Tis shame indeed that future days should hear
How such a force as ours, so great, so brave,
Hath thus been baffled, fighting, as we do,
'Gainst numbers far inferior to our own, 140
And see no end of all our warlike toil.
For should we choose, on terms of plighted truce,
Trojans and Greeks, to number our array;
Of Trojans, all that dwell within the town,
Of Greeks, our force by tens distributed; 145
And ev'ry ten should choose one Trojan guest
To entertain, and pledge in gen'rous wine;
Full many a ten would find no guest to pledge:
So far the sons of Greece outnumber all

That dwell within the town; but to their aid 150
Bold warriors come from all the cities round,
Who greatly harass me, and render vain
My hope to storm the strong-built walls of Troy.
Already now nine weary years have pass'd;
The timbers of our ships are all decay'd, 155
The cordage rotted; in our homes the while
Our wives and helpless children sit, in vain
Expecting our return; and still the work,
For which we hither came, remains undone.
Hear then my counsel; let us all agree 160
Home to direct our course, since here in vain
We strive to take the well-built walls of Troy."

Thus as he spoke, the crowd, that had not heard
The secret council, by his words was mov'd;
So sway'd and heav'd the multitude, as when 165
O'er the vast billows of th' Icarian sea
Eurus and Notus from the clouds of Heav'n
Pour forth their fury; or as some deep field
Of wavy corn, when Zephyr briskly sweeps
Along the plain, and stirs the bristling ears; 170
So was th' Assembly stirr'd; and tow'rd the ships

With clam'rous joy they rush'd; beneath their feet
Rose clouds of dust, while one to other call'd
To seize the ships and drag them to the main.
They clear'd the channels, and with shouts of "home" 175
That rose to Heav'n, they knock'd the shores away.
Then had the Greeks in shameful flight withdrawn,
Had Juno not to Pallas thus appeal'd:
"Oh Heav'n! brave child of ægis-bearing Jove,
Shall thus the Greeks, in ignominious flight, 180
O'er the wide sea their homeward course pursue,
And as a trophy to the sons of Troy
The Argive Helen leave, on whose account,
Far from their home, so many valiant Greeks
Have cast their lives away? Go quickly thou 185
Amid the brass-clad Greeks, and man by man
Address with words persuasive, nor permit
To launch their well-trimm'd vessels on the deep."

She said, nor did Minerva not obey,
But swift descending from Olympus' heights 190
With rapid flight she reach'd the Grecian ships.
Ulysses standing there she found, as Jove
Weighty in council; he no hand had laid

On his dark vessel, for with bitter grief
His heart was fill'd; the blue-ey'd Maid approach'd, 195
And thus address'd him: "Great Laertes' son,
Ulysses, sage in council, can it be
That you, the men of Greece, embarking thus
On your swift ships, in ignominious flight,
O'er the wide sea will take your homeward way, 200
And as a trophy to the sons of Troy
The Argive Helen leave, on whose account
Far from their homes so many valiant Greeks
Have cast their lives away? Go quickly thou
Among the multitude, and man by man 205
Address with words persuasive, nor permit
To launch their well-trimm'd vessels on the deep."

She said; the heav'nly voice Ulysses knew;
Straight, springing to the course, he cast aside,
And to Eurybates of Ithaca, 210
His herald and attendant, threw his robe;
Then to Atrides hasten'd, and by him
Arm'd with his royal staff ancestral, pass'd
With rapid step amid the ships of Greece.
Each King or leader whom he found he thus 215

With cheering words encourag'd and restrain'd:

"O gallant friend, 'tis not for thee to yield,

Like meaner men, to panic; but thyself

Sit quiet, and the common herd restrain.

'Thou know'st not yet Atrides' secret mind: 220

He tries us now, and may reprove us soon.

His words in council reach'd not all our ears:

See that he work us not some ill; for fierce

His anger; and the Lord of counsel, Jove,

From whom proceeds all honour, loves him well." 225

But of the common herd whome'er he found

Clam'ring, he check'd with staff and threat'ning words:

"Good friend, keep still, and hear what others say,

Thy betters far: for thou art good for nought,

Of small account in council or in fight. 230

All are not sov'reigns here; ill fares the state

Where many masters rule; let one be Lord,

One King supreme; to whom wise Saturn's son

In token of his sov'reign power hath giv'n

The sceptre's sway and ministry of law." 235

Such were his words, as through the ranks he pass'd:

They from the vessels and the tents again

Throng'd to th' Assembly, with such rush of sound,

As when the many-dashing ocean's wave

Breaks on the shore, and foams the frothing sea. 240

The others all were settled in their seats:

Only Thersites, with unmeasur'd words,

Of which he had good store, to rate the chiefs,

Not over-seemly, but wherewith he thought

To move the crowd to laughter, brawl'd aloud. 245

The ugliest man was he who came to Troy:

With squinting eyes, and one distorted foot,

His shoulders round, and buried in his breast

His narrow head, with scanty growth of hair.

Against Achilles and Ulysses most 250

His hate was turn'd; on them his venom pour'd;

Anon, at Agamemnon's self he launch'd

His loud-tongued ribaldry; th' indignant Greeks

With anger heard, as now with scurril words,

Bawling aloud, he thus address'd the King: 255

“What more, thou son of Atreus, wouldst thou have?

Thy tents are full of brass; and in those tents

Many fair women, whom, from all the spoil,

We Greeks, whene'er some wealthy town we take,

Choose first of all, and set apart for thee. 260

Or dost thou thirst for gold, which here perchance

Some Trojan brings, the ransom of his son

Captur'd by me, or by some other Greek?

Or some new girl, to gratify thy lust,

Kept for thyself apart? a leader, thou 265

Shouldst not to evil lead the sons of Greece.

Ye slaves! ye coward souls! Women of Greece!

I will not call you men! why go we not

Home with our ships, and leave this mighty chief

To gloat upon his treasures, and find out 270

Whether in truth he need our aid, or no;

Who on Achilles, his superior far,

Foul scorn hath cast, and robb'd him of his prize,

Which for himself he keeps? Achilles, sure,

Is not intemperate, but mild of mood; 275

Else, Atreus' son, this insult were thy last."

On Agamemnon, leader of the host,

With words like these Thersites pour'd his hate;

But straight Ulysses at his side appear'd,

And spoke, with scornful glance, in stern rebuke: 280

"Thou babbling fool, Thersites, prompt of speech,

Restrain thy tongue, nor thus revile the Kings.
Of all the men that with th' Atridæ came
To Troy, I hold thee for the meanest far.
Ill it beseems, that such an one as thou 285
Should lift thy voice against the Kings, and rail
With scurril ribaldry, and prate of home.
How these affairs may end, we know not yet;
Nor how, or well or ill, we may return.
Cease then against Atrides, King of men, 290
To pour thy spite, for that the valiant Greeks
To him, despite thy railing, as of right
An ample portion of the spoils assign.
But this I tell thee, and will make it good,
If e'er I find thee play the fool, as now, 295
Then may these shoulders cease this head to bear,
And may my son Telemachus no more
Own me his father, if I strip not off
Thy mantle and thy garments, aye, expose
Thy nakedness, and flog thee to the ships 300
Howling, and scourg'd with ignominious stripes."

Thus as he spoke, Ulysses on his neck
And back let fall his heavy staff; the wretch

Shrank from the blow, and scalding tears let fall.
Where struck the golden-studded staff, appear'd 305
A bloody weal: Thersites quail'd, and down,
Quiv'ring with pain, he sat, and wip'd away,
With horrible grimace, the trickling tears.
The Greeks, though all indignant, laugh'd aloud,
And one to other said, "Good faith, of all 310
The many works Ulysses well hath done,
Wise in the council, foremost in the fight,
He ne'er hath done a better, than when now
He makes this scurril babbler hold his peace.
Methinks his headstrong spirit will not soon 315
Lead him again to vilify the Kings."

Thus spoke the gen'ral voice: but, staff in hand,
Ulysses rose; Minerva by his side,
In likeness of a herald, bade the crowd
Keep silence, that the Greeks, from first to last, 320
Might hear his words, and ponder his advice.
He thus with prudent phrase his speech began:
"Great son of Atreus, on thy name, O King,
Throughout the world will foul reproach be cast,
If Greeks forget their promise, nor make good 325

The vow they took to thee, when hitherward
We sail'd from Argos' grassy plains, to raze,
Ere our return, the well-built walls of Troy.
But now, like helpless widows, or like babes,
They mourn their cruel fate, and pine for home. 330
'Tis hard indeed defeated to return;
The seaman murmurs, if from wife and home,
Ev'n for one month, his well-found bark be stay'd,
Toss'd by the wintry blasts and stormy sea;
But us the ninth revolving year beholds 335
Still ling'ring here: I cannot therefore blame
Our valiant Greeks, if by the ships I hear
Their murmurs; yet 'twere surely worst of all
Long to remain, and bootless to return.
Bear up, my friends, remain awhile, and see 340
If Calchas truly prophesy, or no.
For this ye all have seen, and can yourselves
Bear witness, all who yet are spar'd by fate,
Not long ago, when ships of Greece were met
At Aulis, charg'd with evil freight for Troy, 345
And we, around a fountain, to the Gods
Our altars rear'd, with faultless hecatombs,

Near a fair plane-tree, where bright water flow'd,
Behold a wonder! by Olympian Jove
Sent forth to light, a snake, with burnish'd scales, 350
Of aspect fearful, issuing from beneath
The altars, glided to the plane-tree straight.
There, on the topmost bough, beneath the leaves
Cowering, a sparrow's callow nestlings lay;
Eight fledglings, and the parent bird the ninth. 355
All the eight nestlings, utt'ring piercing cries,
The snake devour'd; and as the mother flew,
Lamenting o'er her offspring, round and round,
Uncoiling, caught her, shrieking, by the wing.
Then, when the sparrow's nestlings and herself 360
The snake had swallow'd, by the God, who first
Sent him to light, a miracle was wrought:
For Jove, the deep-designing Saturn's son,
Turn'd him to stone; we stood, and wond'ring gaz'd.
But when this prodigy befell our rites, 365
Calchas, inspir'd of Heav'n, took up his speech:
'Ye long-hair'd sons of Greece, why stand ye thus
In mute amaze? to us Olympian Jove,
To whom be endless praise, vouchsafes this sign,

Late sent, of late fulfilment; as ye saw 370

The snake devour the sparrow and her young,

Eight nestlings, and the parent bird the ninth;

So, for so many years, are we condemn'd

To wage a fruitless war; but in the tenth

The wide-built city shall at last be ours.' 375

Thus he foretold, and now the time is come.

Here then, ye well-greav'd Greeks, let all remain,

Till Priam's wealthy city be our own."

He said, and loudly cheer'd the Greeks—and loud
From all the hollow ships came back the cheers— 380
In admiration of Ulysses' speech.

Geranian Nestor next took up the word:

"Like children, Grecian warriors, ye debate;

Like babes to whom unknown are feats of arms.

Where then are now our solemn covenants, 385

Our plighted oaths? Go, cast we to the fire

Our councils held, our warriors' plans matur'd,

Our absolute pledges, and our hand-plight giv'n,

In which our trust was plac'd; since thus in vain

In words we wrangle, and how long soe'er 390

We here remain, solution none we find.

Atrides, thou, as is thy wont, maintain
Unchang'd thy counsel; for the stubborn fight
Array the Greeks; and let perdition seize
Those few, those two or three among the host, 395
Who hold their separate counsel—(not on them
Depends the issue!)—rather than return
To Argos, ere we prove if Jove indeed
Will falsify his promis'd word, or no.
For well I ween, that on the day when first 400
We Grecians hitherward our course address'd,
To Troy the messengers of blood and death,
Th' o'er-ruling son of Saturn, on our right
His lightning flashing, with auspicious sign
Assur'd us of his favour; let not then 405
The thoughts of home be breath'd, ere Trojan wives
Given to our warriors, retribution pay
For wrongs by us, in Helen's cause, sustain'd.
But who-so longs, if such an one there be,
To make his homeward voyage, let him take 410
His well-rigg'd bark, and go; before the rest
To meet the doom of death! But thou, O King!
Be well advis'd thyself, and others lead

By wholesome counsel; for the words I speak
Are not to be despis'd; by tribes and clans, 415
O Agamemnon! range thy troops, that so
Tribe may to tribe give aid, and clan to clan.
If thus thou do, and Greeks thy words obey,
Then shalt thou see, of chiefs and troops alike,
The good and bad; for on their own behoof 420
They all shall fight; and if thou fail, shalt know
Whether thy failure be of Heav'n's decree,
Or man's default and ignorance of war."

To whom the monarch Agamemnon thus:
"Father, in council, of the sons of Greece, 425
None can compare with thee; and would to Jove,
To Pallas, and Apollo, at my side
I had but ten such counsellors as thee!
Then soon should royal Priam's city fall,
Tak'n and destroy'd by our victorious hands. 430
But now on me hath ægis-bearing Jove,
The son of Saturn, fruitless toil impos'd,
And hurtful quarrels; for in wordy war
About a girl, Achilles and myself
Engag'd; and I, alas! the strife began: 435

Could we be friends again, delay were none,
How short soe'er, of Ilium's final doom.
But now to breakfast, ere we wage the fight.
Each sharpen well his spear, his shield prepare,
Each to his fiery steeds their forage give, 440
Each look his chariot o'er, that through the day
We may unwearied stem the tide of war;
For respite none, how short soe'er, shall be
Till night shall bid the storm of battle cease.
With sweat shall reek upon each warrior's breast 445
The leathern belt beneath the cov'ring shield;
And hands shall ache that wield the pond'rous spear:
With sweat shall reek the fiery steeds that draw
Each warrior's car; but whomsoe'er I find
Loit'ring beside the beaked ships, for him 450
'Twere hard to 'scape the vultures and the dogs."

He said; and from th' applauding ranks of Greece
Rose a loud sound, as when the ocean wave,
Driv'n by the south wind on some lofty beach,
Dashes against a prominent crag, expos'd 455
To blasts from ev'ry storm that roars around.
Uprising then, and through the camp dispers'd

They took their sev'ral ways, and by their tents
The fires they lighted, and the meal prepar'd;
And each to some one of th' immortal Gods 460
His off'ring made, that in the coming fight
He might escape the bitter doom of death.
But to the o'er-ruling son of Saturn, Jove,
A sturdy ox, well-fatten'd, five years old,
Atrides slew; and to the banquet call'd 465
The aged chiefs and counsellors of Greece:
Nestor the first, the King Idomeneus,
The two Ajaxes next, and Tydeus' son,
Ulysses sixth, as Jove in council sage.
But uninvited Meneläus came, 470
Knowing what cares upon his brother press'd.
Around the ox they stood, and on his head
The salt cake sprinkled; then amid them all
The monarch Agamemnon pray'd aloud:
"Most great, most glorious Jove! who dwell'st on high, 475
In clouds and darkness veil'd, grant Thou that ere
This sun shall set, and night o'erspread the earth,
I may the haughty walls of Priam's house
Lay prostrate in the dust; and burn with fire

His lofty gates; and strip from Hector's breast 480

His sword-rent tunic, while around his corpse

Many brave comrades, prostrate, bite the dust."

Thus he; but Saturn's son his pray'r denied;

Receiv'd his off'rings, but his toils increas'd.

Their pray'rs concluded, and the salt cake strew'd 485

Upon the victim's head, they drew him back,

And slew, and flay'd; then cutting from the thighs

The choicest pieces, and in double layers

O'erspreading them with fat, above them plac'd

The due meat-off'rings; these they burnt with logs 490

Of leafless timber; and the inward parts,

First to be tasted, o'er the fire they held.

The thighs consum'd with fire, the inward parts

They tasted first; the rest upon the spits

Roasted with care, and from the fire withdrew. 495

Their labours ended, and the feast prepar'd,

They shar'd the social meal, nor lack'd there aught.

The rage of thirst and hunger satisfied,

Grecian Nestor thus his speech began:

"Most mighty Agamemnon, King of men, 500

Great Atreus' son, no longer let us pause,

The work delaying which the pow'rs of Heav'n
Have trusted to our hands; do thou forthwith
Bid that the heralds proclamation make,
And summon through the camp the brass-clad Greeks; 505
While, in a body, through the wide-spread ranks
We pass, and stimulate their warlike zeal."

He said; and Agamemnon, King of men,
Obedient to his counsel, gave command
That to the war the clear-voic'd heralds call 510
The long-hair'd Greeks: they gave the word, and straight
From ev'ry quarter throng'd the eager crowd.
The Heav'n-born Kings, encircling Atreus' son,
The troops inspected: Pallas, blue-ey'd Maid,
Before the chiefs her glorious ægis bore, 515
By time untouch'd, immortal: all around
A hundred tassels hung, rare works of art,
All gold, each one a hundred oxen's price.
With this the Goddess pass'd along the ranks,
Exciting all; and fix'd in every breast 520
The firm resolve to wage unwearied war;
And dearer to their hearts than thoughts of home
Or wish'd return, became the battle-field.

As when a wasting fire, on mountain tops,
Seizes the blazing woods, afar is seen 525
The glaring light; so, as they mov'd, to Heav'n
Flash'd the bright glitter of their burnish'd arms.

As when a num'rous flock of birds, or geese,
Or cranes, or long-neck'd swans, on Asian mead,
Beside Cäyster's stream, now here, now there, 530
Disporting, ply their wings; then settle down
With clam'rous noise, that all the mead resounds;
So to Scamander's plain, from tents and ships,
Pour'd forth the countless tribes; the firm earth groan'd
Beneath the tramp of steeds and armèd men. 535
Upon Scamander's flow'ry mead they stood,
Unnumber'd as the vernal leaves and flow'rs.

Or as the multitudinous swarms of flies,
That round the cattle-sheds in spring-tide pour,
While the warm milk is frothing in the pail; 540
So numberless upon the plain, array'd
For Troy's destruction, stood the long-hair'd Greeks.
And as experienc'd goat-herds, when their flocks
Are mingled in the pasture, portion out
Their sev'ral charges, so the chiefs array'd 545

Their squadrons for the fight; while in the midst
The mighty monarch Agamemnon mov'd:
His eye, and lofty brow, the counterpart
Of Jove, the Lord of thunder; in his girth
Another Mars, with Neptune's ample chest. 550
As 'mid the thronging heifers in a herd
Stands, proudly eminent, the lordly bull;
So, by Jove's will, stood eminent that day,
'Mid many heroes, Atreus' godlike son.

Say now, ye Nine, who on Olympus dwell, 555
Muses (for ye are Goddesses, and ye
Were present, and know all things: we ourselves
But hear from Rumour's voice, and nothing know),
Who were the chiefs and mighty Lords of Greece.
But should I seek the multitude to name, 560
Not if ten tongues were mine, ten mouths to speak,
Voice inexhaustible, and heart of brass,
Should I succeed, unless, Olympian maids,
The progeny of ægis-bearing Jove,
Ye should their names record, who came to Troy. 565
The chiefs, and all the ships, I now rehearse.

Bœotia's troops by Peneleus were led,

And Lëitus, and Prothöenor bold,
Arcesilas and Clonius: they who dwelt
In Hyria, and on Aulis' rocky coast, 570
Scœnus, and Scolus, and the highland range
Of Etëonus; in 'Thespeia's vale,
Graia, and Mycalessus' wide-spread plains:
And who in Harma and Eilesium dwelt,
And in Erythræ, and in Elcon, 575
Hyle, and Peteon, and Ocalea,
In Copæ, and in Meleon's well-built fort,
Eutresis, Thisbe's dove-frequented woods,
And Coronea, and the grassy meads
Of Haliartus; and Plataea's plain, 580
In Glissa, and the foot of Lower Thebes,
And in Anchestus, Neptune's sacred grove;
And who in viny-cluster'd Arne dwelt,
And in Mideia, and the lovely site
Of Nissa, and Anthedon's utmost bounds. 585
With these came fifty vessels; and in each
Were six score youths, Bœotia's noblest flow'r.
Who in Aspledon dwelt, and Minyas' realm
Orchomenus, two sons of Mars obey'd,

Ascalaphus, and bold Ialmenus; 590

In Actor's house, the son of Azeus, born

Of fair Astyoche, a maiden pure,

Till in the upper chamber, where she slept,

Stout Mars by stealth her virgin bed assail'd:

Of these came thirty ships in order due. 595

By Schedius and Epistrophus, the sons

Of great Iphitus, son of Naubolus,

Were led the Phocian forces; these were they

Who dwelt in Cyparissus, and the rock

Of Python, and on Crissa's lovely plain; 600

And who in Daulis, and in Panope,

Anemorea and Hyampolis,

And by Cephissus' sacred waters dwelt,

Or in Lilæa, by Cephissus' springs.

In their command came forty dark-ribb'd ships. 605

These were the leaders of the Phocian bands,

And on Bœotia's left their camp was pitch'd.

Ajax, Oïleus' son, the Locrians led;

Swift-footed, less than Ajax Telamon,

Of stature low, with linen breastplate arm'd: 610

But skill'd to throw the spear o'er all who dwell

In Hellas or Achaia: these were they
From Cynos, Opus, and Calliarus,
Bessa, and Scarpha, and Augæa fair,
Tarpha, and Thronium, by Boagrius' stream. 615
Him from beyond Eubœa's sacred isle,
Of Locrians follow'd forty dark-ribb'd ships.

Breathing firm courage high, th' Abantian host,
Who from Eubœa and from Chalcis came,
Or who in vine-clad Histiaea dwelt, 620
Eretria, and Cerinthus maritime,
And who the lofty fort of Dium held,
And in Carystus and in Styra dwelt:
These Elephenor led, true plant of Mars,
Chalcodon's son, the brave Abantian chief. 625

Him, all conspicuous with their long back hair,
The bold Abantians follow'd; spearmen skill'd,
Who through the foemen's breastplates knew full well,
Held in firm grasp, to drive the ashen spear.
In his command came forty dark-ribb'd ships. 630

Those who in Athens' well-built city dwelt,
The noble-soul'd Erectheus' heritage;
Child of the fertile soil, by Pallas rear'd,

Daughter of Jove, who him in Athens plac'd
In her own wealthy temple; there with blood 635
Of bulls and lambs, at each revolving year,
The youths of Athens do him sacrifice;
These by Menestheus, Petëus' son, were led.
With him might none of mortal men compare,
In order due of battle to array 640
Chariots and buckler'd men; Nestor alone
Perchance might rival him, his elder far.
In his command came fifty dark-ribb'd ships.

Twelve ships from Salamis with Ajax came,
And they beside th' Athenian troops were rang'd. 645

Those who from Argos, and the well-wall'd town
Of Tyrins came, and from Hermione,
And Asine, deep-bosom'd in the bay;
And from Troezen and Eione,
And vine-clad Epidaurus; and the youths 650
Who dwelt in Mases, and Ægina's isle;
O'er all of these the valiant Diomed
Held rule; and Sthenelus, th' illustrious son
Of far-fam'd Capaneus; with these, the third,
A godlike warrior came, Euryalus, 655

Son of Mecistheus, Taläus' royal son.

Supreme o'er all was valiant Diomed.

In their command came eighty dark-ribb'd ships.

Who in Mycenæ's well-built fortress dwelt,

And wealthy Corinth, and Cleone fair, 660

Orneia, and divine Aræthure,

And Sicyon, where Adrastus reign'd of old,

And Gonoessa's promontory steep,

And Hyperesia, and Pellene's rock;

Ægina, and the scatter'd towns that lie 665

Along the beach, and wide-spread Helice;

Of these a hundred ships obey'd the rule

Of mighty Agamemnon, Atreus' son.

The largest and the bravest host was his;

And he himself, in dazzling armour clad, 670

O'er all the heroes proudly eminent,

Went forth exulting in his high estate,

Lord of the largest host, and chief of chiefs.

Those who in Lacedæmon's lowland plains,

And who in Sparta and in Phare dwelt, 675

And who on Messa's dove-frequented cliffs,

Bryseia, and Ægæa's lovely vale,

And in Amyclæ, and the sea-bath'd fort
Of Helos, Œtylus and Laas dwelt;
His valiant brother Menelæus led, 680
With sixty ships; but rang'd apart they lay.
Their chief, himself in martial ardour bold,
Inspiring others, fill'd with fierce desire
The rape of Helen and his wrongs to avenge.

They who in Pylos and Arene dwelt, 685
And Thryum, by the ford of Alpheus' stream,
In Cyparissus and Amphigene,
Pteleon, and lofty Œpus' well-built fort,
Helos, and Dorium, where the Muses met,
And put to silence Thracian Thamyris, 690
As from Œechalia, from the royal house
Of Eurytus he came; he, over-bold,
Boasted himself pre-eminent in song,
Ev'n though the daughters of Olympian Jove,
The Muses, were his rivals: they in wrath 695
Him of his sight at once and pow'r of song
Amere'd, and bade his hand forget the lyre.
These by Gerenian Nestor all were led,
In fourscore ships and ten in order due.

They of Arcadia, and the realm that lies 700
Beneath Cyllene's mountain high, around
The tomb of Æpytus, a warrior race;
The men of Pheneus and Orchomenus
In flocks abounding; who in Ripa dwelt,
In Stratia, and Enispe's breezy height, 705
Or Tegea held, and sweet Mantinea,
Stymphalus and Parrhasia; these were led
By Agapenor brave, Anchæus' son,
In sixty ships; in each a num'rous crew
Of stout Arcadian youths, to war inur'd. 710
The ships, wherewith they cross'd the dark-blue sea,
Were giv'n by Agamemnon, King of men,
The son of Atreus; for th' Arcadian youth
Had ne'er to maritime pursuits been train'd.
Who in Buprasium and in Elis dwelt, 715
Far as Hyrmine, and th' extremest bounds
Of Myrsinus; and all the realm that lies
Between Aleisium and th' Olenian rock;
These by four chiefs were led; and ten swift ships,
By bold Epeians mann'd, each chief obey'd. 720
Amphimachus and Thalpius were the first,

Sons of two brothers, Cteatus the one,
The other Eurytus, to Actor born;
Next Amarynceus' son, Diores bold;
The fourth Polyxenus, the godlike son 725
Of Augeas' royal heir, Agasthenes.

They of Dulichium, and the sacred isles,
Th' Echinades, which face, from o'er the sea,
The coast of Elis, were by Meges led,
The son of Phyleus, dear to Jove, in arms 730
Valiant as Mars; who, with his sire at feud,
Had left his home, and to Dulichium come:
In his command were forty dark-ribb'd ships.

Those who from warlike Cephalonia came,
And Ithaca, and leafy Neritus, 735
And Crocyleium; rugged Ægilips,
And Samos, and Zacynthus, and the coast
Of the mainland with its opposing isles;
These in twelve ships, with scarlet-painted bows,
Ulysses led, in council sage as Jove. 740

Thoas, Andraemon's son, th' Ætolians led;
From Pleuron, and Pylone, Olenus,
Chalcis-by-sea, and rocky Calydon:

The race of Ceneus was no more ; himself,
And fair-hair'd Meleager, both were dead: 745

Whence all Ætolia's rule on him was laid.
In his command came forty dark-ribb'd ships.

The King Idomeneus the Cretans led,
From Cnossus, and Gortyna's well-wall'd town,
Miletus, and Lycastus' white-stone cliffs, 750

Lyctus, and Phæstus, Rhytium, and the rest
Whom Crete from all her hundred cities sent:

These all Idomeneus, a spearman skill'd,
Their King, commanded ; and Meriones,
In battle terrible as blood-stain'd Mars. 755

In their command came fourscore dark-ribb'd ships.

Valiant and tall, the son of Hercules,
Tlepolemus, nine vessels brought from Rhodes,
By gallant Rhodians mann'd, who tripartite
Were settled, and in Ialyssus dwelt, 760

In Lindus, and Cameirus' white-stone hills.

These all renown'd Tlepolemus obey'd,
Who to the might of Hercules was born
Of fair Astyoche ; his captive she,

When many a goodly town his arms had raz'd, 765

Was brought from Ephyra, by Selles' stream.
Rear'd in the royal house, Tlepolemus,
In early youth, his father's uncle slew,
A warrior once, but now in life's decline,
Lycimnius; then in haste a fleet he built, 770
Muster'd a num'rous host; and fled, by sea,
The threaten'd vengeance of the other sons
And grandsons of the might of Hercules.
Long wand'rings past, and toils and perils borne,
To Rhodes he came; his followers, by their tribes, 775
Three districts form'd; and so divided, dwelt,
Belov'd of Jove, the King of Gods and men,
Who show'r'd upon them boundless store of wealth.

Nireus three well-trimm'd ships from Syme brought;
Nireus, to Charops whom Aglaia bore; 780
Nireus, the goodliest man of all the Greeks,
Who came to Troy, save Peleus' matchless son:
But scant his fame, and few the troops he led.

Who in Nisyrus dwelt, and Carpathus,
And Cos, the fortress of Eurypylus, 785
And in the Casian and Calydnian Isles,
Were by Phidippus led, and Antiphus,

Two sons of Thessalus, Alcides' son;

With them came thirty ships in order due.

Next those who in Pelasgian Argos dwelt, 790

And who in Alos, and in Alope,

Trachys, and Phthia, and in Hellas fam'd

For women fair; of these, by various names,

Achaians, Myrmidons, Hellenes, known,

In fifty ships, Achilles was the chief. 795

But from the battle-strife these all abstain'd,

Since none there was to marshal their array.

For Peleus' godlike son, swift-footed chief,

Lay idly in his tent, the loss resenting

Of Brises' fair-hair'd daughter; whom himself 800

Had chosen, prize of all his warlike toil,

When he Lyrnessus and the walls of Thebes

O'erthrew, and Mynes and Epistrophus

Struck down, bold warriors both, Evenus' sons,

Selepius' royal heir; for her in wrath, 805

He held aloof, but soon again to appear.

Those in the flow'ry plain of Pyrrhasus,

To Ceres dear, who dwelt; in Phylace,

In Iton, rich in flocks, and, by the sea,

In Antron, and in Pteleon's grass-clad meads ; 810

These led Protesilas, renown'd in arms,

While yet he liv'd ; now laid beneath the sod.

In Phylace were left his weeping wife,

And half-built house ; him, springing to the shore,

First of the Greeks, a Dardan warrior slew. 815

Nor were his troops, their leader though they mourn'd,

Left leaderless ; the post of high command

Podarces claim'd of right, true plant of Mars,

Iphiclus' son, the rich Phylacides ;

The brother he of brave Protesilas, 820

Younger in years, nor equal in renown ;

Yet of a chief no want the forces felt,

Though much they mourn'd their valiant leader slain.

In his command came forty dark-ribb'd ships.

Those who from Pheræ came, beside the lake 825

Bœbeis, and who dwelt in Glaphyræ,

In Bœbe, and Iolcos' well-built fort,

These in eleven ships Eumelus led,

Whom Pelias' daughter, fairest of her race,

Divine Alcestis to Admetus bore. 830

Who in Methone and Thaumacia dwelt,

In Melibœa and Olizon's rock ;
These Philoctetes, skilful archer, led.
Sev'n ships were theirs, and ev'ry ship was mann'd
By fifty rowers, skilful archers all. 835
But he, their chief, was lying, rack'd with pain,
On Lemnos' sacred isle ; there left perforce
In torture from a venomous serpent's wound :
There he in anguish lay ; nor long, ere Greeks
Of royal Philoctetes felt their need. 840
Yet were his troops, their leader though they mourn'd,
Not leaderless : Oileus' bastard son,
Medon, of Rhene born, their ranks array'd.
Who in Œchalia, Eurytus' domain,
In Tricca, and in rough Ithome dwelt, 845
These Podalirius and Machaon led,
Two skilful leeches, Æsculapins' sons.
Of these came thirty ships in order due.
Who in Ormenium and Asterium dwelt,
By Hypercia's fount, and on the heights 850
Of Titanum's white peaks, of these was chief
Eurypylus, Euæmon's gallant son ;
In his command came forty dark-ribb'd ships.

Who in Argissa and Gyrtone dwelt,
Ortha, Elone, and the white-wall'd town 855
Of Oloösson, Polypoetes led;
Son of Pirithöus, progeny of Jove,
A warrior bold; Hippodamia fair
Him to Pirithöus bore, what time he slew
The shaggy Centaurs, and from Pelion's heights 860
For refuge 'mid the rude Æthreians drove.
Nor he alone; with him to Troy there came
A scion true of Mars, Leonteus, heir
Of nobly-born Coronus, Caneus' son.
In their command came forty dark-ribb'd ships. 865
With two and twenty vessels Gouneus came
From Cythus; he the Enienes led,
And the Peræbians' warlike tribes, and those
Who dwelt around Dodona's wintry heights,
Or till'd the soil upon the lovely banks 870
Of Titaresius, who to Peneus pours
The tribute of his clearly-flowing stream;
Yet mingles not with Peneus' silver waves,
But on the surface floats like oil, his source
From Styx deriving, in whose awful name 875

Both Gods and men by holiest oaths are bound.

Magnesia's troops, who dwelt by Peneus' stream,
Or beneath Pelion's leafy-quiv'ring shades,
Swift-footed Prothōus led, Tenthredon's son:
In his command came forty dark-ribb'd ships. 880

These were the leaders and the chiefs of Greece:
Say, Muse, of these, who with th' Atridae came,
Horses and men, who claim'd the highest praise.
Of steeds, the bravest and the noblest far
Were those Eumelus drove, Admetus' son: 885
Both swift as birds, in age and colour match'd,
Alike in height, as measur'd o'er the back;
Both mares, by Phœbus of the silver bow
Rear'd in Pieria, thunderbolts of war.
Of men, while yet Achilles held his wrath, 890
The mightiest far was Ajax Telamon;
For with Achilles, and the steeds that bore
The matchless son of Peleus, none might vie:
But 'mid his beak'd ocean-going ships
He lay, with Agamemnon, Atreus' son, 895
Indignant; while his troops upon the beach
With quoits and jav'ins whil'd away the day,

And feats of archery; their steeds the while
The lotus-grass and marsh-grown parsley cropp'd,
Each standing near their car; the well-wrought cars 900
Lay all unheeded in the warriors' tents;
They, inly pining for their godlike chief,
Roam'd listless up and down, nor join'd the fray.

Such was the host, which, like devouring fire,
O'erspread the land; the earth beneath them groan'd: 905
As when the Lord of thunder, in his wrath,
The earth's foundations shakes, in Arimi,
Where, buried deep, 'tis said, Typhoeus lies;
So at their coming, groan'd beneath their feet
The earth, as quickly o'er the plain they spread. 910

To Troy, sent down by ægis-bearing Jove,
With direful tidings storm-swift Iris came.
At Priam's gate, in solemn conclave met,
Were gather'd all the Trojans, young and old:
Swift Iris stood amidst them, and, the voice 915
Assuming of Polites, Priam's son,
The Trojan scout, who, trusting to his speed,
Was posted on the summit of the mound
Of ancient Æsuetes, there to watch

Till from their ships the Greecian troops should land; 920

His voice assuming, thus the Goddess spoke:

“Old man, as erst in peace, so still thou lov’st

The strife of words; but fearful war is nigh.

Full many a host in line of battle rang’d

My eyes have seen; but such a force as this, 925

So mighty and so vast, I ne’er beheld:

In number as the leaves, or as the sand,

Against the city o’er the plain they come.

Then, Hector, for to thee I chiefly speak,

This do; thou know’st how various our allies, 930

Of diff’rent nations and discordant tongues:

Let each then those command o’er whom he reigns,

And his own countrymen in arms array.”

She said; and Hector knew the voice divine,

And all, dissolv’d the council, flew to arms. 935

The gates were open’d wide; forth pour’d the crowd,

Both foot and horse; and loud the tumult rose.

Before the city stands a lofty mound,

In the mid plain, by open space enclos’d;

Men call it Batiaa; but the Gods 940

The tomb of swift Myrinna; muster’d there

The Trojans and Allies their troops array'd.

The mighty Hector of the glancing helm,
The son of Priam, led the Trojan host:

The largest and the bravest band were they, 945

Bold spearmen all, who follow'd him in arms.

Anchises' valiant son, Æneas, led
The Dardans; him, 'mid Ida's jutting peaks,
Immortal Venus to Anchises bore,

A Goddess yielding to a mortal's love: 950

With him, well skill'd in war, Archilochus
And Acamas, Antenor's gallant sons.

Who in Zeleia dwelt, at Ida's foot,
Of Trojan race, a wealthy tribe, who drank
Of dark Æsepus' waters, these were led 955

By Pandarus, Lycaon's noble son,
Taught by Apollo's self to draw the bow.

Who from Adraste, and Apærus' realm,
From Pityeia, and the lofty hill
Tereian came, with linen corslets girt, 960

Adrastus and Amphius led; two sons
Of Merops of Percote; deeply vers'd
Was he in prophecy; and from the war

Would fain have kept his sons ; but they, by fate
Doom'd to impending death, his caution scorn'd. 965

Those who from Præctium and Percote came,
And who in Sestos and Abydos dwelt,
And in Arisba fair ; those Asius led,
The son of Hyrtacus, of heroes chief ;
Asius the son of Hyrtacus, who came 970
From fair Arisba, borne by fiery steeds
Of matchless size and strength, from Selles' stream.

Hippothöus led the bold Pelasgian tribes,
Who dwell in rich Larissa's fertile soil,
Hippothöus and Pylæus, Lethus' sons, 975
The son of Teutamus, Pelasgian chief.

The Thracians, by fast-flowing Hellespont
Encompass'd, Acamas and Peiröus brave ;
The spear-skill'd Cicones Euphemus led,
Son of Træzenus, Cæus' highborn son. 980

From distant Amydon Pyräemes brought
The Pæon archers from broad Axius' banks ;
Axius, the brightest stream on earth that flows.

The hairy strength of great Pylæmenes.
The Paphlagonians led from Eneti 985

(Whence first appear'd the stubborn race of mules),
Who in Cytorus and in Sesamum,
And round Parthenius' waters had their home;
Who dwelt in Cromne, and Ægialus,
And on the lofty Erythianian rock. 990

By Hodius and Epistrophus were brought
From distant Alybe, the wealthy source
Of silver ore, the Alizonian bands.

Chromis the Mysians led, and Ennomus;
A skilful augur, but his augury 995
From gloomy death to save him nought avail'd;
Slain by the son of Peleus, in the stream,
Where many another Trojan felt his arm.

From far Ascania's lake, with Phoreys join'd,
The godlike presence of Ascanius brought 1000
The Phrygians, dauntless in the standing fight.

From Lydia came Pylæmenes' two sons,
Born of the lake Gygeian; Antiphus,
And Mesthles; these Mæonia's forces led,
Who dwelt around the foot of Tmolus' hill. 1005

In charge of Nastes came the Carian troops,
Of barbarous speech; who in Miletus dwelt,

And in the dense entangled forest shade
Of Phthira's hill, and on the lofty ridge
Of Mycale, and by Mæander's stream; 1010
These came with Nastes and Amphimacus;
Amphimacus and Nastes, Nomion's sons;
With childish folly to the war he came,
Laden with store of gold; yet nought avail'd
His gold to save him from the doom of death; 1015
Slain by the son of Peleus in the stream;
And all his wealth Achilles bore away.

Sarpedon last, and valiant Glaucus led
The Lycian bands, from distant Lycia's shore,
Beside the banks of Xanthus' eddying stream. 1020

BOOK III.

WHEN by their sev'ral chiefs the troops were rang'd,
With noise and clamour, as a flight of birds,
The men of Troy advanc'd; as when the cranes,
Flying the wintry storms, send forth on high
Their dissonant clamours, while o'er th' ocean stream 5
They steer their course, and on their pinions bear
Battle and death to the Pygmæan race.

On th' other side the Greeks in silence mov'd,
Breathing firm courage, bent on mutual aid.
As when the south wind o'er the mountain tops 10
Spreads a thick veil of mist, the shepherd's bane,
And friendly to the nightly thief alone,
That a stone's throw the range of vision bounds;
So rose the dust-cloud, as in serried ranks
With rapid step they mov'd across the plain. 15
But when th' opposing forces near were met,
A panther's skin across his shoulders flung,

Arm'd with his bow and sword, in front of all
Advanc'd the godlike Paris; in his hand
He pois'd two brass-tipp'd jav'lins, and defied 20
To mortal combat all the chiefs of Greece.

Him when the warlike Meneläus saw
With haughty strides advancing from the crowd;
As when a lion, hunger-pinch'd, espies
Some mighty beast of chase, or antler'd stag, 25
Or mountain goat, and with exulting spring
Strikes down his prey, and on the carcase feeds,
Unscar'd by baying hounds and eager youths:
So Meneläus saw with fierce delight
The godlike Paris; for he deem'd that now 30
His vengeance was at hand; and from his car,
Arm'd as he was, he leap'd upon the plain.
But when the godlike Paris saw him spring
Defiant from the ranks, with quailing heart,
Back to his comrades' shelt'ring crowd he sprang, 35
In fear of death; as when some trav'ller spies,
Coil'd in his path upon the mountain side,
A deadly snake, back he recoils in haste,
His limbs all trembling, and his cheek all pale;

So back recoil'd, in fear of Atreus' son, 40
The godlike Paris 'mid the Trojan host.

To whom in stern rebuke thus Hector spoke :
" Thou wretched Paris, though in form so fair,
Thou slave of woman, manhood's counterfeit !
Would thou hadst ne'er been born, or died at least 45
Unwedded ; so 'twere better far for all,
Than thus to live a scandal and reproach.
Well may the long-hair'd Greeks triumphant boast,
Who think thee, from thine outward show, a chief
Among our warriors ; but thou hast in truth 50
Nor strength of mind, nor courage in the fight.
How was't that such as thou could e'er induce
A noble band, in ocean-going ships
To cross the main, with men of other lands
Mixing in amity, and bearing thence 55
A woman, fair of face, by marriage ties
Bound to a race of warriors ; to thy sire,
Thy state, thy people, cause of endless grief,
Of triumph to thy foes, contempt to thee !
Durst thou the warlike Meneläus meet, 60
Thou to thy cost shouldst learn the might of him

Whose bride thou didst not fear to bear away :
Then shouldst thou find of small avail thy lyre,
Or Venus' gifts of beauty and of grace,
Or, trampled in the dust, thy flowing hair. 65
But too forbearing are the men of Troy ;
Else for the ills that thou hast wrought the state,
Ere now thy body had in stone been cas'd."

To whom the godlike Paris thus replied :
" Hector, I needs must own thy censure just, 70
Nor without cause ; thy dauntless courage knows
Nor pause nor weariness ; but as an axe,
That in a strong man's hand, who fashions out
Some naval timber, with unbated edge
Cleaves the firm wood, and aids the striker's force ; 75
Ev'n so unwearied is thy warlike soul.
Yet blame not me for golden Venus' gifts :
The gifts of Heav'n are not to be despis'd,
Which Heav'n may give, but man could not command.
But if thou wilt that I should dare the fight, 80
Bid that the Trojans and the Grecians all
Be seated on the ground ; and in the midst
The warlike Meneläus and myself

Stand front to front, for Helen and the spoils
Of war to combat; and whoe'er shall prove 85
The better man in conflict, let him bear
The woman and the spoils in triumph home;
While ye, the rest, in peace and friendship sworn,
Shall still possess the fertile plains of Troy;
And to their native Argos they return, 90
For noble steeds and lovely women fam'd."

He said, and Hector joy'd to hear his words:
Forth in the midst he stepp'd, and with his spear
Grasp'd by the middle, stay'd the Trojan ranks.
At him the long-hair'd Grecians bent their bows, 95
Prompt to assail with arrows and with stones;
But loud the monarch Agamemnon's voice
Was heard; "Hold, Argives, hold! ye sons of Greece,
Shoot not! for Hector of the glancing helm
Hath, as it seems, some message to impart." 100

He said; they held their hands, and silent stood
Expectant, till to both thus Hector spoke:
"Hear now, ye Trojans, and ye well-greav'd Greeks,
The words of Paris, cause of all this war.
He asks through me that all the host of Troy 105

And Grecian warriors shall upon the ground
Lay down their glitt'ring arms; while in the midst
The warlike Meneläus and himself
Stand front to front, for Helen and the spoils
Of war to combat; and whoe'er shall prove 110
The better man in conflict, let him bear
The woman and the spoils in triumph home,
While we, the rest, firm peace and friendship swear."

Thus Hector spoke; the rest in silence heard;
But Meneläus, bold in fight, replied: 115
"Hear now my answer; in this quarrel I
May claim the chiefest share; and now I hope
Trojans and Greeks may see the final close
Of all the labours ye so long have borne
T' avenge my wrong, at Paris' hand sustain'd. 120
And of us two whiche'er is doom'd to death,
So let him die! the rest, depart in peace.
Bring then two lambs, one white, the other black,
For Tellus and for Sol; we on our part
Will bring another, for Saturnian Jove: 125
And let the majesty of Priam too
Appear, himself to consecrate our oaths,

(For reckless are his sons, and void of faith,)
That none Jove's oath may dare to violate.
For young men's spirits are too quickly stirr'd; 130
But in the councils check'd by rev'rend age,
Alike are weigh'd the future and the past,
And for all int'rests due provision made."

He said, and Greeks and Trojans gladly heard,
In hopes of respite from the weary war. 135
They rang'd the cars in ranks; and they themselves
Descending doff'd their arms, and laid them down
Close each by each, with narrow space between.
Two heralds to the city Hector sent
To bring the lambs, and aged Priam call; 140
While Agamemnon to the hollow ships,
Their lamb to bring, in haste Talthybius sent:
He heard, and straight the monarch's voice obey'd.

Meantime to white-arm'd Helen Iris sped,
The heav'nly messenger: in form she seem'd 145
Her husband's sister, whom Antenor's son
The valiant Helicaon had to wife,
Laodice, of Priam's daughters all
Loveliest of face: she in her chamber found

Her whom she sought: a mighty web she wove, 150
Of double woof and brilliant hues; whereon
Was interwoven many a toilsome strife
Of Trojan warriors and of brass-clad Greeks,
For her encounter'd at the hand of Mars.
Beside her Iris stood, and thus she spoke: 155
"Come, sister dear, and see the glorious deeds
Of Trojan warriors and of brass-clad Greeks.
They who erewhile, impatient for the fight,
Roll'd o'er the plain the woful tide of war,
Now silent sit, the storm of battle hush'd, 160
Reclining on their shields, their lances bright
Pil'd by their sides; while Paris in the midst,
And warlike Meneläus, stand prepar'd
With the long spear for thee to fight; thyself
The prize of conquest and the victor's wife." 165
Thus as she spoke, in Helen's breast arose
Fond recollection of her former Lord,
Her home, and parents; o'er her head she threw
A snowy veil; and shedding tender tears
She issu'd forth, not unaccompanied; 170
For with her went fair Æthra, Pittheus' child,

And stag-ey'd Clymene, her maidens twain.

They quickly at the Scaean gate arriv'd.

Attending there on aged Priam, sat

The Elders of the city; Panthöus, 175

And Lampus, and Thymætes; Clytius,

Bold Icetäon, and Ucalegon,

With sage Antenor, wise in council both:

All these were gather'd at the Scaean gate;

By age exempt from war, but in discourse 180

Abundant, as the cricket, that on high

From topmost boughs of forest tree sends forth

His delicate music; so on Ilium's tow'rs

Sat the sage chiefs and councillors of Troy.

Helen they saw, as to the tow'r she came; 185

And, "'tis no marvel," one to other said,

"The valiant Trojans and the well-greav'd Greeks

For beauty such as this should long endure

The toils of war; for goddess-like she seems;

And yet, despite her beauty, let her go, 190

Nor bring on us and on our sons a curse."

Thus they; but aged Priam Helen call'd:

"Come here, my child, and sitting by my side,

From whence thou canst discern thy former Lord,
His kindred, and thy friends (not thee I blame, 195
But to the Gods I owe this woful war),
Tell me the name of yonder mighty chief
Among the Greeks a warrior brave and strong:
Others in height surpass him; but my eyes
A form so noble never yet beheld, 200
Nor so august; he moves, a King indeed!"

To whom in answer, Helen, heav'nly fair:
"With rev'rence, dearest father, and with shame
I look on thee: oh would that I had died
That day when hither with thy son I came, 205
And left my husband, friends, and darling child,
And all the lov'd companions of my youth:
That I died not, with grief I pine away.
But to thy question: I will tell thee true;
Yon chief is Agamemnon, Atreus' son, 210
Wide-reigning, mighty monarch, ruler good,
And valiant warrior; in my husband's name,
Lost as I am, I call'd him brother once."

She spoke: th' old man admiring gaz'd, and cried,
"Oh bless'd Atrides, child of happy fate, 215

Favour'd of Heav'n! how many noble Greeks
Obey thy rule! In vine-clad Phrygia once
I saw the hosts of Phrygian warriors wheel
Their rapid steeds; and with them, all the bands
Of Otreus, and of Mygdon, godlike King, 220
Who lay encamp'd beside Sangarius' stream:
I too with them was number'd, in the day
When met them in the field the Amazons,
The woman-warriors; but their forces all
Reach'd not the number of the keen-ey'd Greeks." 225

Ulysses next the old man saw, and ask'd,
"Tell me again, dear child, who this may be,
In stature less than Atreus' royal son,
But broader-shoulder'd, and of ampler chest.
His arms are laid upon the fertile plain, 230
But he himself is moving through the ranks,
Inspecting, like a full-fleec'd ram, that moves
Majestic through a flock of snow-white ewes."

To whom Jove's offspring, Helen, thus replied:
"The wise Ulysses that, Laertes' son: 235
Though bred in rugged Ithaca, yet vers'd
In ev'ry stratagem, and deep device."

“O woman,” then the sage Antenor said,
“Of these thy words I can the truth avouch;
For hither when on thine account to treat, 240
Brave Meneläus and Ulysses came,
I lodg’d them in my house, and lov’d them both,
And studied well the form and mind of each.
As they with Trojans mix’d in social guise,
When both were standing, o’er his comrade high 245
With broad-set shoulders Meneläus stood;
Seated, Ulysses was the nobler form:
Then, in the great Assembly, when to all
Their public speech and argument they fram’d,
In fluent language Meneläus spoke, 250
In words though few, yet clear; though young in years,
No wordy babbler, wasteful of his speech:
But when the skill’d Ulysses rose to speak,
With down-cast visage would he stand, his eyes
Bent on the ground; the staff he bore, nor back 255
He wav’d, nor forward, but like one untaught,
He held it motionless; who only saw
Would say that he was mad, or void of sense:
But when his chest its deep-ton’d voice sent forth,

With words that fell like flakes of wintry snow, 260

No mortal with Ulysses could compare :

Though little reck'd we of his outward show."

At sight of Ajax next th' old man enquir'd ;

"Who is yon other warrior, brave and strong,

Tow'ring o'er all with head and shoulders broad?" 265

To whom, in answer, Helen, heav'nly fair :

"Gigantic Ajax that, the prop of Greece ;

And by his side Idomeneus of Crete

Stands godlike, circled round by Cretan chiefs.

The warlike Meneläus welcom'd him 270

Oft in our palace, when from Crete he came.

Now all the other keen-ey'd Greeks I see,

Whom once I knew, and now could call by name ;

But two I miss, two captains of the host,

My own two brethren, and my mother's sons, 275

Castor and Pollux ; Castor, horseman bold,

Pollux, unmatch'd in pugilistic skill.

In Lacedæmon have they stay'd behind ?

Or can it be, in ocean-going ships

That they have come indeed, but shun to join 280

The fight of warriors, fearful of the shame,

And deep disgrace that on my name attend?"

Thus she; unconscious that in Sparta they,
Their native land, beneath the sod were laid.

Meanwhile the heralds through the city bore 285

The treaty off'rings to the Gods; the lambs,

And genial wine, the produce of the soil,

In goat-skin flasks: therewith a flagon bright,

And cups of gold, Idæus brought, and stood

Beside the aged King, as thus he spoke: 290

"Son of Laomedon, arise! the chiefs

Of Trojan warriors and of brass-clad Greeks

Call for thy presence on the battle-plain

To swear a truce; where Paris in the midst

And warlike Menelæus stand prepar'd 295

With the long spear for Helen and the spoils

Of war to combat, that whoe'er may prove

The better man in fight, may bear away

The woman and the spoils in triumph home;

While we, the rest, in peace and friendship sworn, 300

Shall still possess the fertile plains of Troy;

And to their native Argos they return,

For noble steeds and lovely women fam'd."

He said; the old man shudder'd at his words:

But to his comrades gave command forthwith 305

To yoke his car; and they his word obey'd.

Priam, ascending, gather'd up the reins,

And with Antenor by his side, the twain

Drove through the Scaean gate their flying steeds.

But when between th' opposing ranks they came, 310

Alighting from the car, they mov'd on foot

Between the Trojan and the Grecian hosts.

Uprose then Agamemnon, King of men,

Uprose the sage Ulysses; to the front

The heralds brought the off'rings to the Gods, 315

And in the flagon mix'd the wine, and pour'd

The hallowing water on the monarchs' hands.

His dagger then the son of Atreus drew,

Suspended, as was wont, beside the hilt

Of his great sword; and from the victim's head 320

He cut the sacred lock, which to the chiefs

Of Troy and Greece the heralds portion'd out.

Then with uplifted hands he pray'd aloud:

"O Father Jove! who rul'st from Ida's height,

Most great! most glorious! and thou Sun, who see'st 325

And hearest all things! Rivers! and thou Earth!
And ye, who after death beneath the earth
Your vengeance wreak on souls of men forsworn,
Be witness ye, and this our cov'nant guard.
If Meneläus fall by Paris' hand, 330
Let him retain both Helen and the spoil,
While in our ships we take our homeward way;
If Paris be by Meneläus slain,
Troy shall surrender Helen and the spoil,
With compensation due to Greece, that so 335
A record may to future days remain.
But, Paris slain, if Priam and his sons
The promis'd compensation shall withhold,
Then here, my rights in battle to assert,
Will I remain, till I the end achieve." 340

Thus as he spoke, across the victims' throats
He drew the pitiless blade, and on the ground
He laid them gasping, as the stream of life
Pour'd forth, their vigour by the blade subdued.
Then, from the flagon drawn, from out the cups 345
The wine they pour'd; and to th' eternal Gods
They pray'd; and thus from Trojans and from Greeks

Arose the joint petition; "Grant, O Jove!
Most great! most glorious! grant, ye heav'nly pow'rs,
That whosoe'er this solemn truce shall break, 350
Ev'n as this wine we pour, their hearts' best blood,
Theirs and their children's, on the earth be pour'd,
And strangers in subjection take their wives!"

Thus they; but Jove, unyielding, heard their pray'r.
The rites perform'd, then aged Priam spoke: 355
"Hear me, ye Trojans, and ye well-greav'd Greeks!
To Ilium's breezy heights I now withdraw,
For that mine eyes will not endure the sight
Of warlike Meneläus and my son
Engag'd in deadly combat; of the two 360
Which may be doom'd to death, is only known
To Jove, and to th' immortal pow'rs of Heav'n."

Thus spoke the godlike King; and on the car
He plac'd the consecrated lambs; himself
Ascending then, he gather'd up the reins, 365
And with Antenor by his side, the twain
To Ilium's walls retrac'd their homeward way.

Then Hector, son of Priam, measur'd out,
With sage Ulysses join'd, th' allotted space;

Next, in the brass-bound helmet cast the lots, 370
Which of the two the first should throw the spear.
The crowd, with hands uplifted, to the Gods,
Trojans and Greeks alike, address'd their pray'r:
"O Father Jove! who rul'st from Ida's height,
Most great! most glorious! grant that whosoe'er 375
On both our armies hath this turmoil brought
May undergo the doom of death, and we,
The rest, firm peace and lasting friendship swear."

Thus they; great Hector of the glancing helm,
With eyes averted, shook the casque; and forth 380
Was cast the lot of Paris; on the ground
The rest lay down by ranks, where near to each
Were rang'd his active steeds, and glitt'ring arms.
Then o'er his shoulders donn'd his armour bright
The godlike Paris, fair-hair'd Helen's Lord: 385
First on his legs the well-wrought greaves he fix'd,
Fasten'd with silver clasps; his ample chest
A breastplate guarded, by Lycaon lent,
His brother, but which fitted well his form.
Around his shoulders slung, his sword he bore, 390
Brass-bladed, silver-studded; then his shield

Weighty and strong ; and on his firm-set head
A helm he wore, well wrought, with horsehair plume
That nodded, fearful, o'er his brow ; his hand
Grasp'd the firm spear, familiar to his hold. 395
Prepar'd alike the adverse warrior stood.

They, from the crowd apart their armour donn'd,
Came forth ; and each, with eyes of mutual hate,
Regarded each : admiring wonder seiz'd
The Trojan warriors and the well-greav'd Greeks, 400
As in the centre of the measur'd ground
They stood oppos'd, and pois'd their quiv'ring spears.
First Paris threw his weighty spear, and struck
Fair in the midst Atrides' buckler round,
But broke not through ; upon the stubborn targe 405
Was bent the lance's point ; then thus to Jove,
His weapon hurling, Meneläus pray'd :
" Great King, on him who wrought me causeless wrong,
On Paris, grant that retribution due
My arm may bring ; that men in days to come 410
May fear their host to injure, and repay
With treach'rous wile his hospitable cares."

He said, and poising, hurl'd his weighty spear :

Full in the midst it struck the buckler round;
Right through the buckler pass'd the sturdy spear, 415
And through the gorgeous breastplate, and within
Cut through the linen vest; but Paris, back
Inclining, stoop'd, and shunn'd the doom of death.

Atrides then his silver-studded sword
Rearing on high, a mighty blow let fall 420
On Paris' helm; but shiv'ring in his hand
In countless fragments flew the faithless blade.
Then thus to Jove, with eyes uplift to Heav'n,
Atrides made his moan: "O Father Jove!
Of all the Gods, the most unfriendly thou! 425
On Paris' head I hop'd for all his crimes
To wreak my vengeance due; but in my grasp
My faithless sword is shatter'd, and my spear
Hath bootless left my hand, nor reach'd my foe."
Then onward rushing, by the horsehair plume 430
He seiz'd his foeman's helm, and wrenching round
Dragg'd by main force amid the well-greav'd Greeks.
The broider'd strap, that, pass'd beneath his beard,
The helmet held, the warrior's throat compress'd:
Then had Atrides dragg'd him from the field, 435

And endless fame acquir'd; but Venus, child
Of Jove, her fav'rite's peril quickly saw,
And broke the throttling strap of tough bull's-hide.
In the broad hand the empty helm remain'd.
The trophy, by their champion whirl'd amid 440
The well-greav'd Greeks, his eager comrades seiz'd;
While he, infuriate, rush'd with murl'rous aim
On Priam's son; but him, the Queen of Love
(As Gods can only) from the field convey'd,
Wrapt in a misty cloud; and on a couch, 445
Sweet perfumes breathing, gently laid him down;
Then went in search of Helen; her she found,
Circled with Trojan dames, on Ilium's tow'r:
Her by her airy robe the Goddess held,
And in the likeness of an aged dame 450
Who oft for her, in Sparta when she dwelt,
Many a fair fleece had wrought, and lov'd her well,
Address'd her thus: "Come, Helen, to thy house;
Come, Paris calls thee; in his chamber he
Expects thee, resting on luxurious couch, 455
In costly garb, with manly beauty grac'd:
Not from the fight of warriors wouldst thou deem

He late had come, but for the dance prepar'd,
Or resting from the dance's pleasing toil."

She said, and Helen's spirit within her mov'd; 460
And when she saw the Goddess' beauteous neck,
Her lovely bosom, and her glowing eyes,
She gaz'd in wonder, and address'd her thus:
"Oh why, great Goddess, make me thus thy sport?

Seek'st thou to bear me far away from hence 465
To some fair Phrygian or Mæonian town,
If there some mortal have thy favour gain'd?

Or, for that Menelæus in the field
Hath vanquish'd Paris, and is willing yet
That I, his bane, should to his home return: 470
Here art thou found, to weave again thy wiles!

Go then thyself! thy godship abdicate!
Renounce Olympus! lavish here on him
Thy pity and thy care! he may perchance
Make thee his wife—at least his paramour! 475
But thither go not I! foul shame it were
Again to share his bed; the dames of Troy
Will for a byword hold me; and e'en now
My soul with endless sorrow is possess'd."

To whom in anger heav'nly Venus spoke : 480

“Incense me not, poor fool! lest I in wrath
Desert thee quite, and as I heretofore
Have lov'd, so make thee object of my hate;
And kindle, 'twixt the Trojans and the Greeks,
Such bitter feuds, as both shall wreak on thee.” 485

She said; and trembled Helen, child of Jove:

She rose in silence; in a snow-white veil
All glitt'ring, shrouded; by the Goddess led
She pass'd, unnotic'd by the Trojan dames.

But when to Paris' splendid house they came, 490

Thronging around her, her attendants gave
Their duteous service; through the lofty hall
With queenly grace the godlike woman pass'd.

A seat the laughter-loving Goddess plac'd
By Paris' side; there Helen sat, the child 495

Of ægis-bearing Jove, with downcast eyes,
Yet with sharp words she thus address'd her Lord:

“Back from the battle? would thou there hadst died

Beneath a warrior's arm, whom once I call'd
My husband! vainly didst thou boast erewhile 500

Thine arm, thy dauntless courage, and thy spear

The warlike Meneläus should subdue !

Go now again, and challenge to the fight

The warlike Meneläus. Be thou ware !

I warn thee, pause, ere madly thou presume 505

With fair-hair'd Meneläus to contend !

Soon shouldst thou fall beneath his conqu'ring spear."

To whom thus Paris : "Wring not thus my soul

With keen reproaches : now, with Pallas' aid,

Hath Meneläus conquer'd ; but my day 510

Will come : I too can boast my guardian Gods.

But turn we now to love, and love's delights ;

For never did thy beauty so inflame

My sense ; not when from Lacedæmon first

I bore thee in my ocean-going ships, 515

And revell'd in thy love on Cranaë's isle,

As now it fills my soul with fond desire."

He said, and led her to the nuptial couch ;

Her Lord she follow'd ; and while there reclin'd

Upon the richly-inlaid couch they lay, 520

Atrides, like a lion baffled, rush'd

Amid the crowd, if haply he might find

The godlike Paris ; but not one of all

The Trojans and their brave allies could aid
The warlike Meneläus in his search : 525
Not that, for love, would any one that knew
Have screen'd him from his anger, for they all
Abhorr'd him as the shade of death : then thus
Outspoke great Agamemnon, King of men :
“Hear me, ye Trojans, Dardans, and Allies ! 530
With warlike Meneläus rests, 'tis plain,
The prize of vict'ry : then surrender ye
The Argive Helen and the spoils of war,
With compensation due to Greece, that so
A record may to future days remain.” 535
Thus he ; the Greeks, assenting, cheer'd his words. 536

BOOK IV.

ON golden pavement, round the board of Jove,
The Gods were gather'd; Hebe in the midst
Pour'd the sweet nectar; they, in golden cups,
Each other pledg'd, as down they look'd on Troy.
Then Jove, with cutting words and taunting tone, 5
Began the wrath of Juno to provoke:
"Two Goddesses for Meneläus fight,
Thou, Juno, Queen of Argos, and with thee
Minerva, shield of warriors; but ye two
Look idly on, in vain delights absorb'd; 10
While laughter-loving Venus, at the side
Of Paris standing, still averts his fate,
And rescues, when, as now, expecting death.
To warlike Meneläus we decree,
Of right, the vict'ry; but consult we now 15
What may the issue be; if we shall light
Again the flame of war and discord fierce,

Or the two sides in peace and friendship join.

For me, if thus your gen'ral voice incline,

Let Priam's city stand, and Helen back 20

To warlike Meneläus be restor'd."

So spoke the God ; but seated side by side,

Juno and Pallas glances interchang'd

Of ill portent for Troy ; Pallas indeed

Sat silent ; and, though inly wroth with Jove, 25

Yet answer'd not a word ; but Juno's breast

Could not contain her rage, and thus she spoke :

"What words, dread son of Saturn, dost thou speak ?

How wouldst thou render vain, and void of fruit,

My weary labour and my horses' toil, 30

To stir the people, and on Priam's self,

And Priam's offspring, bring disastrous fate ?

Do as thou wilt ! yet not with our consent."

To whom, in wrath, the Cloud-compeller thus :

"Revengeful ! how have Priam and his sons 35

So deeply injur'd thee, that thus thou seek'st

With unabated anger to pursue,

Till thou o'erthrow, the strong-built walls of Troy ?

I verily believe that till thou force

The gates, and raze the lofty walls, and feed 40
On the raw flesh of Priam and his sons,
Thy vengeance never will be satisfied.
But have thy will, lest this in future times
'Twixt me and thee be cause of strife renew'd.
Yet hear my words, and ponder what I say: 45
If e'er, in times to come, my will should be
Some city to destroy, inhabited
By men belov'd of thee, thou shalt not seek
To turn aside my wrath, but give it way.
Spontaneous, yet with most unwilling mind, 50
So much I grant thee; for beneath the sun
And starry Heav'n, of all the cities fair,
By mortal men inhabited, not one
Was dearer to my soul than sacred Troy,
And Priam's self, and Priam's warrior race. 55
For with drink-off'rings due, and fat of lambs,
My altar still hath at their hands been fed;
Such honour hath to us been ever paid."

To whom the stag-ey'd Juno thus replied:
"Three cities are there, dearest to my heart; 60
Argos, and Sparta, and the ample streets

Of rich Mycenæ; work on them thy will;
Destroy them, if thine anger they incur;
I will not interpose, nor hinder thee;
Mourn them I shall; reluctant see their fall, 65
But not resist; for sov'reign is thy will.
Yet should my labours not be fruitless all;
For I too am a God; my blood is thine;
Worthy of honour, as the eldest born
Of deep-designing Saturn, and thy wife; 70
Thine, who o'er all th' Immortals reign'st supreme.
But yield we each to other, I to thee,
And thou to me; the other Gods will all
By us be rul'd. On Pallas then enjoin
That to the battle-field of Greece and Troy 75
She haste, and so contrive that Trojans first
May break the treaty, and the Greeks assail."

She said: the Sire of Gods and men complied,
And thus with wingèd words to Pallas spoke:
"Go to the battle-field of Greece and Troy 80
In haste, and so contrive that Trojans first
May break the treaty, and the Greeks assail."

His words fresh impulse gave to Pallas' zeal,

And from Olympus' heights in haste she sped ;
Like to a meteor, that, of grave portent 85
To warring armies or sea-faring men,
The son of deep-designing Saturn sends,
Bright-flashing, scatt'ring fiery sparks around,
The blue-ey'd Goddess darted down to earth,
And lighted in the midst; amazement held 90
The Trojan warriors and the well-greav'd Greeks ;
And one to other look'd and said, "What means
This sign? Must fearful battle rage again,
Or may we hope for gentle peace from Jove,
Who to mankind dispenses peace and war?" 95
Such was the converse Greeks and Trojans held.
Pallas meanwhile, amid the Trojan host,
Clad in the likeness of Antenor's son,
Læodocus, a spearman stout and brave,
Search'd here and there, if haply she might find 100
The godlike Pandarus; Lycaon's son,
Strong and of courage unprov'd, she found
Standing, by buckler'd warriors bold begirt,
Who follow'd him from far Æsepus' stream.
She stood beside him, and address'd him thus: 105

“Wilt thou by me be rul’d, Lycaon’s son?
For durst thou but at Meneläus shoot
Thy wingèd arrow, great would be thy fame,
And great thy favour with the men of Troy,
And most of all with Paris; at his hand 110
Thou shalt receive rich guerdon, when he hears
That warlike Meneläus, by thy shaft
Subdued, is laid upon the fun’ral pyre.
Bend then thy bow at Atreus’ glorious son,
Vowing to Phœbus, Lycia’s guardian God, 115
The Archer-King, to pay of firstling lambs
An ample hecatomb, when home return’d
In safety to Zeleia’s sacred town.”
Thus she; and, fool, he listen’d to her words.
Straight he uncas’d his polish’d bow, his spoil 120
Won from a mountain ibex, which himself,
In ambush lurking, through the breast had shot,
True to his aim, as from behind a crag
He came in sight; prone on the rock he fell;
With horns of sixteen palms his head was crown’d; 125
These deftly wrought a skilful workman’s hand,
And polish’d smooth, and tipp’d the ends with gold.

He bent, and resting on the ground his bow,
Strung it anew; his faithful comrades held
Their shields before him, lest the sons of Greece 130
Should make their onset ere his shaft could reach
The warlike Meneläus, Atreus' son.
His quiver then withdrawing from its case,
With care a shaft he chose, ne'er shot before,
Well-feather'd, messenger of pangs and death; 135
The stinging arrow fitted to the string,
And vow'd to Phœbus, Lycia's guardian God,
The Archer-King, to pay of firstling lambs
An ample hecatomb, when home return'd
In safety to Zeleia's sacred town. 140
At once the sinew and the notch he drew;
The sinew to his breast, and to the bow
The iron head; then, when the mighty bow
Was to a circle strain'd, sharp rang the horn,
And loud the sinew twang'd, as tow'rd the crowd 145
With deadly speed the eager arrow sprang.

Nor, Meneläus, was thy safety then
Uncar'd for of the Gods; Jove's daughter first,
Pallas, before thee stood, and turn'd aside

The pointed arrow; turn'd it so aside 150
As when a mother from her infant's cheek,
Wrapt in sweet slumbers, brushes off a fly;
Its course she so directed that it struck
Just where the golden clasps the belt restrain'd,
And where the breastplate, doubled, check'd its force. 155
On the close-fitting belt the arrow struck;
Right through the belt of curious workmanship
It drove, and through the breastplate richly wrought,
And through the coat of mail he wore beneath,
The best defence his body to protect 160
From hostile jav'lins; that too pierc'd it through,
And passing onwards graz'd the hero's flesh.
Forth issued from the wound the crimson blood.
Thus haply when the hand of some fair maid,
Lydian or Carian, stains with crimson dye 165
The iv'ry cheek-piece of a warrior's steed,
By many a valiant horseman coveted,
As in the house it lies, a monarch's boast,
The horse adorning, and the horseman's pride:
So, Meneläus, then thy graceful thighs, 170
And knees, and ancles, with thy blood were dy'd.

Great Agamemnon shudder'd as he saw
The crimson blood-drops issuing from the wound ;
Shudder'd the warlike Meneläus' self ;
But when the sinew and the arrow-head 175
He saw projecting, back his spirit came.

Then deeply groaning, Agamemnon spoke,
As Meneläus by the hand he held,
And with him groan'd his comrades: " Brother dear,
Fatal to thee hath been the oath I swore, 180
When thou stood'st forth alone for Greece to fight ;
Wounded by Trojans, who their plighted faith
Have trodden under foot ; but not in vain
Shall be the cov'nants and the blood of lambs,
The absolute pledges, and the hand-plight giv'n, 185
In which our trust was plac'd ; if not at once,
Hereafter Jove shall vindicate their claim ;
And heavy penalties shall Trojans pay
With their own blood, their children's, and their wives'.
For in my inmost soul full well I know 190
The day shall come when this imperial Troy,
And Priam's race, and Priam's royal self,
Shall in one common ruin be o'erthrown ;

And Saturn's son himself, high-thronèd Jove,
Who dwells in Heav'n, shall in their faces flash 195
His ægis dark and dread, this treach'rous deed
Avenging; this shall surely come to pass.
But, Meneläus, deep will be my grief,
If thou shouldst perish, meeting thus thy fate.
To thirsty Argos should I then return 200
By foul disgrace o'erwhelm'd; for, with thy fall,
The Greeks will mind them of their native land;
And as a trophy to the sons of Troy
The Argive Helen leave; thy bones meanwhile
Shall moulder here beneath a foreign soil, 205
Thy work undone; and with insulting scorn
Some vaunting Trojan, leaping on the tomb
Of noble Meneläus, thus shall say:
'On all his foes may Agamemnon so
His wrath accomplish, who hath hither led 210
Of Greeks a mighty army, all in vain;
And bootless home with empty ships hath gone,
And valiant Meneläus left behind:'
Thus when men speak, gape, earth, and hide my shame."
To whom the fair-hair'd Meneläus thus 215

With cheering words: "Fear not thyself, nor cause
The troops to fear; the arrow hath not touch'd
A vital part; the sparkling belt hath first
Turn'd it aside, the doublet next beneath,
And coat of mail, the work of arm'rer's hands." 220

To whom the monarch Agamemnon thus:
"Dear Meneläus, may thy words be true!
The leech shall tend thy wound, and spread it o'er
With healing ointments to assuage the pain."

He said, and to the sacred herald call'd: 225
"Haste thee, Talthybius! summon with all speed
The son of Æsculapius, matchless leech,
Machaon; bid him hither haste to see
The warlike Meneläus, chief of Greeks,
Who by an arrow from some practis'd hand, 230
Trojan or Lycian, hath receiv'd a wound;
A cause of boast to them, to us of grief."

He said; nor did the herald not obey,
But through the brass-clad ranks of Greece he pass'd,
In search of brave Machaon; him he found 235
Standing, by buckler'd warriors bold begirt,
Who follow'd him from Trica's grassy plains.

He stood beside him, and address'd him thus :

“Up, son of Æsculapius ! Atreus' son,

The mighty monarch, summons thee to see 240

The warlike Meneläus, chief of Greeks,

Who by an arrow from some practis'd hand,

Trojan or Lycian, hath receiv'd a wound ;

A cause of boast to them, to us of grief.”

Thus he ; and not unmov'd Machaon heard : 245

They through the crowd, and through the wide-spread host,

Together took their way ; but when they came

Where fair-hair'd Meneläus, wounded, stood,

Around him in a ring the best of Greece,

And in the midst the godlike chief himself, 250

From the close-fitting belt the shaft he drew,

With sharp return of pain ; the sparkling belt

He loosen'd, and the doublet underneath,

And coat of mail, the work of arm'rer's hand.

But when the wound appear'd in sight, where struck 255

The stinging arrow, from the clotted blood

He cleans'd it, and applied with skilful hand

The healing ointments, which, in friendly guise,

The learned Chiron to his father gave.

While round the valiant Meneläus they 260
Were thus engag'd, advanc'd the Trojan hosts :
They donn'd their arms, and for the fight prepar'd.
In Agamemnon then no trace was seen
Of laggard sloth, no shrinking from the fight,
But full of ardour to the field he rush'd. 265
He left his horses and brass-mounted car
(The champing horses by Eurymedon,
The son of Ptolemy, Peiræus' son,
Were held aloof), but with repeated charge
Still to be near at hand, lest faint with toil 270
His limbs should fail him in his proud career.
Himself on foot the warrior ranks array'd ;
With cheering words addressing whom he found
With zeal preparing for the battle-field :
" Relax not, valiant friends, your warlike toil ; 275
For Jove to falsehood ne'er will give his aid ;
And they who first, regardless of their oaths,
Have broken truce, shall with their flesh themselves
The vultures feed, while we, their city raz'd,
Their wives and helpless children bear away." 280
But whom remiss and shrinking from the war

He found, with keen rebuke he thus assail'd :

“ Ye wretched Greeks, your country's foul reproach,

Have ye no sense of shame? Why stand ye thus

Like timid fawns, that in the chase run down, 285

Stand all bewilder'd, spiritless and tame?

So stand ye now, nor dare to face the fight.

What! will ye wait the Trojans' near approach,

Where on the beach, beside the hoary deep,

Our goodly ships are drawn, and see if Jove 290

Will o'er you his protecting hand extend?”

As thus the King the serried ranks review'd,

He came where thronging round their skilful chief

Idomeneus, the warlike bands of Crete

Were arming for the fight; Idomeneus, 295

Of courage stubborn as the forest boar,

The foremost ranks array'd; Meriones

The rearmost squadrons had in charge; with joy

The monarch Agamemnon saw, and thus

In flatt'ring terms Idomeneus address'd: 300

“ Idomeneus, above all other Greeks,

In battle and elsewhere, I honour thee;

And in the banquet, where the noblest Greeks

In lordly goblets mix the ruddy wine,
Though others drink their share, yet by thy side 305
Thy cup, like mine, still new replenish'd stands
To drink at pleasure. Up then to the fight,
And show thyself the warrior that thou art."

To whom the Cretan King, Idomeneus:

"In me, Atrides, thou shalt ever find, 310
As at the first I promis'd, comrade true;
But go, and stir the other long-hair'd Greeks
To speedy battle; since the Trojans now
The truce have broken; and defeat and death
Must wait on those who have their oaths forsworn." 315

He said, and Agamemnon went his way
Rejoicing; through the crowd he pass'd, and came
Where stood th' Ajaces; them, in act to arm,
Amid a cloud of infantry he found;
And as a goat-herd from his watch-tow'r crag 320
Beholds a cloud advancing o'er the sea,
By Zephyr's breath impell'd; as from afar
He gazes, black as pitch, it sweeps along
O'er the dark ocean's face, and with it brings
A hurricane of rain; he, shudd'ring, sees, 325

And drives his flock beneath the shelt'ring cave;
So thick and dark, about th' Ajaces stirr'd,
Impatient for the war, the stalwart youths,
Black masses, bristling close with spear and shield.

Well pleas'd, the monarch Agamemnon saw, 330
And thus address'd them: "Valiant chiefs, to you,
The leaders of the brass-clad Greeks, I give
(Twere needless and unseemly) no commands;
For well ye understand your troops to rouse
To deeds of dauntless courage; would to Jove, 335
To Pallas and Apollo, that such mind
As is in you, in all the camp were found;
Then soon should Priam's lofty city fall,
Tak'n and destroy'd by our victorious hands."

Thus saying, them he left, and onward mov'd. 340
Nestor, the smooth-tongu'd Pylian chief, he found
The troops arraying, and to valiant deeds
His friends encouraging; stout Pelagon,
Alastor, Chromius, Hæmon, warlike Prince,
And Bias bold, his people's sure defence. 345
In the front rank, with chariot and with horse,
He plac'd the mounted warriors; in the rear,

Num'rous and brave, a cloud of infantry,
Compactly mass'd, to stem the tide of war.
Between the two he plac'd th' inferior troops, 350
That e'en against their will they needs must fight.
The horsemen first he charg'd, and bade them keep
Their horses well in hand, nor wildlly rush
Amid the tumult: "See," he said, "that none,
In skill or valour over-confident, 355
Advance before his comrades, nor alone
Retire; for so your lines were easier forc'd;
But ranging each beside a hostile car,
Thrust with your spears; for such the better way;
By men so disciplin'd, in elder days 360
Were lofty walls and fencèd towns destroy'd."

Thus he, experienc'd in the wars of old;
Well pleas'd, the monarch Agamemnon saw,
And thus address'd him: "Would to Heav'n, old man,
That, as thy spirit, such too were thy strength 365
And vigour of thy limbs; but now old age,
The common lot of mortals, weighs thee down;
Would I could see some others in thy place,
And thou the vigour of thy youth retain!"

To whom Gerenian Nestor thus replied : 370
“ Atrides, I too fain would see restor'd
The strength I once possess'd, what time I slew
The godlike Ereuthalion; but the Gods
On man bestow not all their gifts at once ;
I then was young, and now am bow'd with age, 375
Yet with the chariots can I still go forth,
And aid with sage advice : for such the right
And privilege of age ; to hurl the spear
Belongs to younger men, who after me
Were born, who boast their vigour unimpair'd.” 380

He said; and Agamemnon went his way,
Rejoicing : to Menestheus next he came,
The son of Petëus, charioteer renown'd ;
Him found he, circled by th' Athenian bands,
The raisers of the war-cry ; close beside 385
The sage Ulysses stood, around him rang'd,
Not unrenown'd, the Cephalonian troops :
The sound of battle had not reach'd their ears ;
For but of late the Greek and Trojan hosts
Were set in motion ; they expecting stood, 390
Till other Grecian columns should advance,

Assail the Trojans, and renew the war.

Atrides saw, and thus, reproachful, spoke :

“O son of Petëus, Heav'n-descended King !

And thou too, master of all tricky arts, 395

Why, ling'ring, stand ye thus aloof, and wait

For others coming? ye should be the first

The hot assault of battle to confront ;

For ye are first my summons to receive,

Whene'er the honour'd banquet we prepare : 400

And well ye like to eat the sav'ry meat,

And, at your will, the luscious wine-cups drain :

Now stand ye here, and unconcern'd would see

Ten columns pass before you to the fight.”

To whom, with stern regard, Ulysses thus : 405

“What words have pass'd the barrier of thy lips,

Atrides? how with want of warlike zeal

Canst thou reproach us? when the Greeks again

The fires of war shall kindle, thou shalt see

(If that thou care to see) amid the ranks 410

Of Troy, the father of Telemachus

In the fore-front: thy words are empty wind.”

Atrides smil'd to see him chafe, and thus

Again took up the word: "Ulysses sage,
Laertes' high-born son, not over-much 415
I give thee blame, or orders; for I know
Thy mind to gentle counsels is inclin'd;
Thy thoughts are one with mine; then come, henceforth
Shall all be well; and if a hasty word
Have pass'd, Heav'n grant no ill may thence ensue." 420

Thus saying, them he left, and onward mov'd.
The son of Tydeus, valiant Diomed,
Standing he found amid his warlike steeds
And well-built cars; beside him, Sthenelus,
The son of Capaneus; Atrides saw, 425
And thus address'd him with reproachful words:
"Alas! thou son of Tydeus, wise and bold,
Why crouch with fear? why thus appall'd survey
The pass of war? not so had Tydeus crouch'd;
His hand was ever ready from their foes 430
To guard his comrades; so, at least, they say
Whose eyes beheld his labours; I myself
Nor met him e'er, nor saw; but, by report,
Thy father was the foremost man of men.
A stranger to Mycenæ once he came, 435

With godlike Polynices; not at war,
But seeking succour for the troops that lay
Encamp'd before the sacred walls of Thebes;
For reinforcements earnestly they sued;
The boon they ask'd was granted them, but Jove 440
With unpropitious omens turn'd them back.
Advancing on their journey, when they reach'd
Asopus' grassy banks and rushes deep,
The Greeks upon a mission Tydeus sent:
He went; and many Thebans there he found 445
Feasting in Eteocles' royal hall:
Amid them all, a stranger and alone,
He stood unterrified, and challeng'd all
To wrestle with him, and with ease o'erthrew:
So mighty was the aid that Pallas gave. 450
Whereat indignant, they, on his return,
An ambush set, of fifty chosen youths;
Two were their leaders; Hæmon's godlike son,
Mæon, and Lycophontes, warrior brave,
Son of Autophonus; and these too far'd 455
But ill at Tydeus' hand; he slew them all:
Mæon alone, obedient to the Gods,

He spar'd, and bade him bear the tidings home.

Such Tydeus was: though greater in debate,

His son will never rival him in arms." 460

He said: brave Diomed in silence heard,

Submissive to the monarch's stern rebuke;

Then answer'd thus the son of Capaneus:

"Atrides, speak not falsely: well thou know'st

The truth, that we our fathers far surpass. 465

The seven-gated city, Thebes, we took,

With smaller force beneath the wall of Mars,

Trusting to heav'nly signs, and fav'ring Jove,

Where they by blind, presumptuous folly fail'd;

Then equal not our fathers' deeds with ours." 470

To whom thus Diomed, with stern regard:

"Father, be silent; hearken to my words:

I blame not Agamemnon, King of men,

Who thus to battle stirs the well-greav'd Greeks:

Great will his glory be if we o'ercome 475

The valiant Trojans, and their city take;

Great too his loss, if they o'er us prevail:

Then come, let us too for the fight prepare."

He said; and from the car leap'd down in arms:

Fierce rang the armour on the warrior's breast, 480
That ev'n the stoutest heart might quail with fear.

As by the west wind driv'n, the ocean waves
Dash forward on the far-resounding shore,
Wave upon wave; first curls the ruffled sea
With whit'ning crests; anon with thund'ring roar 485
It breaks upon the beach, and from the crags
Recoiling flings in giant curves its head
Aloft, and tosses high the wild sea-spray:

Column on column, so the hosts of Greece
Pour'd, ceaseless, to the war; to each the chiefs 490
Their orders gave; the rest in silence mov'd:
Nor would ye deem that such a mighty mass,
So passing, could restrain their tongues, in awe
Of their great captains: far around them flash'd
The glitt'ring armour they were girt withal. 495

On th' other hand, the Trojans, as the flocks
That in the court-yard of some wealthy Lord
In countless numbers stand, at milking-time,
Incessant bleating, as their lambs they hear;
So rose their mingled clamours through the camp; 500
For not one language nor one speech was there,

But many nations call'd from distant lands :
These Mars inspir'd, and those the blue-ey'd Maid ;
And Fear, and Flight, and Discord unappeas'd,
Of blood-stain'd Mars the sister and the friend : 505
With humble crest at first, anon her head,
While yet she treads the earth, affronts the skies.
The gage of battle in the midst she threw,
Strode through the crowd, and woe to mortals wrought.
When to the midst they came, together rush'd 510
Bucklers and lances, and the furious might
Of mail-clad warriors ; bossy shield on shield
Clatter'd in conflict ; loud the clamour rose.
Then rose too mingled shouts and groans of men
Slaying and slain ; the earth ran red with blood. 515
As when, descending from the mountain's brow,
Two wintry torrents, from their copious source
Pour downward to the narrow pass, where meet
Their mingled waters in some deep ravine,
Their weight of flood ; on the far mountain's side 520
The shepherd hears the roar ; so loud arose
The shouts and yells of those commingling hosts.

First 'mid the foremost ranks Antilochus,

A Trojan warrior, Echeplus, slew,
A crested chief, Thalesius' noble son. 525
Beneath his horsehair-plumèd helmet's peak
The sharp spear struck; deep in his forehead fix'd
It pierc'd the bone; then darkness veil'd his eyes,
And, like a tow'r, amid the press he fell.
Him Elephenor, brave Abantian chief, 530
Son of Chalcodon, seizing by the feet,
Dragg'd from beneath the darts, in haste to strip
His armour off; but short-liv'd was th' attempt;
For bold Agenor mark'd him as he drew
The corpse aside, and with his brass-tipp'd spear 535
Thrust through his flank, unguarded, as he stoop'd,
Beside his shield; and slack'd his limbs in death.
The spirit was fled; but hotly o'er him rag'd
The war of Greeks and Trojans; fierce as wolves
They fought, man struggling hand to hand with man. 540
Then Ajax Telamon Anthemion's son,
A stalwart stripling, Simöisius, slew;
Whose mother gave him birth on Simöis' banks,
When with her parents down from Ida's heights
She drove her flock; thence Simöisius nam'd: 545

Not destin'd he his parents to repay
Their early care; for short his term of life,
By godlike Ajax' mighty spear subdued.
Him, to the front advancing, in the breast,
By the right nipple, Ajax struck; right through, 550
From front to back, the brass-tipp'd spear was driv'n,
Out through the shoulder; prone in dust he fell:
As some tall poplar, grown in marshy mead,
Smooth-stemm'd, with boughs up-springing tow'rd the head;
Which with the biting axe the wheelwright fells, 555
To bend the felloes of his well-built car;
Sapless, beside the river, lies the tree;
So lay the youthful Simöisius, fell'd
By godlike Ajax' hand. At him, in turn,
The son of Priam, Antiphus, encas'd 560
In radiant armour, from amid the crowd
His jav'lin threw; his mark, indeed, he miss'd;
But through the groin Ulysses' faithful friend,
Leucus, he struck, in act to bear away
The youthful dead; down on the corpse he fell, 565
And, dying, of the dead relax'd his grasp.
Fierce anger, at his comrade's slaughter, fill'd

Ulysses' breast; in burnish'd armour clad
Forward he rush'd; and standing near, around
He look'd, and pois'd on high his glittering lance: 570
Beneath his aim the Trojans back recoil'd;
Nor vainly flew the spear; Democöon,
A bastard son of Priam, met the blow:
He, on a chariot drawn by speedy mares,
Came from Abydos; him Ulysses, fill'd 575
With fury at his lov'd companion's death,
Smote on the head; through either temple pass'd
The pointed spear, and darkness veil'd his eyes.
Thund'ring he fell, and loud his armour rang.
At this the Trojan chiefs, and Hector's self, 580
'Gan to give ground: the Greeks with joyful shouts
Seiz'd on the dead, and forward urg'd their course.
From Ilium's heights Apollo, fill'd with wrath,
Look'd down, and to the Trojans shouted loud:
"Uprouse ye, valiant Trojans! give not way 585
Before the Greeks; their bodies are not stone,
Nor iron, to defy your trenchant swords;
And great Achilles, fair-hair'd Thetis' son,
Fights not, but o'er his anger broods apart."

So from the city call'd the heav'nly voice; 590
The Greeks, meanwhile, all-glorious Pallas fir'd,
Mov'd 'mid the tumult, and the laggards rous'd.

Then fell Diores, Amarynceus' son:

A rugged fragment of a rock had crush'd
His ancle and right knee; from Ænon came 595
The Thracian chief who hurl'd it, Peirōus, son
Of Imbrasmus; the tendons both, and bones,
The huge mass shatter'd; backward in the dust
He fell, both hands extending to his friends,
Gasping his life away; then quick up-ran 600
He who the blow had dealt, and with his spear
Thrust through him, by the navel; from the wound
His bowels gush'd, and darkness veil'd his eyes.

But he, advancing, through the breast was struck
Above the nipple, by th' Ætolian chief, 605
Thoas; and through his lungs the spear was driv'n.
Thoas approach'd, and from his breast withdrew
The sturdy spear, and with his sharp-edg'd sword
Across his waistband gave the mortal stroke:
Yet could not touch his arms; for all around 610
The Thracian warriors, with their tufted crowns,

Their long spears held before them, him, though stout,
And strong, and valiant, kept at bay; perforce
He yielded; and thus side by side were laid
The two, the Thracian and th' Epeian chief; 615
And round them many a valiant soldier lay.

Then well might he his fav'ring fortune bless
Who in that bloody field took part, and pass'd
By sword or spear unwounded, by the hand
Of Pallas guarded from the weapon's flight; 620
For many a Trojan, many a Greek, that day
Prone in the dust, and side by side, were laid. 622

BOOK V.

SUCH strength and courage then to Diomed,

The son of Tydeus, Pallas gave, as rais'd,
'Mid all the Greeks, the glory of his name.

Forth from his helm and shield a fiery light

There flash'd, like autumn's star, that brightest shines 5

When newly risen from his ocean bath.

So from the warrior's head and shoulders flash'd

That fiery light, as to the midst he urg'd

His furious course, where densest masses fought.

There was one Dares 'mid the Trojan host, 10

The priest of Vulcan, rich, of blameless life ;

Two gallant sons he had, Idæus nam'd,

And Phegeus, skill'd in all the points of war.

These, parted from the throng, the warrior met ;

They on their car, while he on foot advanc'd. 15

When near they came, first Phegeus threw his spear ;

O'er the left shoulder of Tydides pass'd

The erring weapon's point, and miss'd its mark.
His pond'rous spear in turn Tydides threw,
And not in vain; on Phegeus' breast it struck, 20
Full in the midst, and hurl'd him from the car.
Idæus from the well-wrought chariot sprang,
And fled, nor durst his brother's corpse defend.
Nor had he so escap'd the doom of death,
But Vulcan bore him safely from the field, 25
In darkness shrouded, that his aged sire
Might not be wholly of his sons bereav'd.
The car Tydides to his comrades gave,
And bade them to the ships the horses drive.
Now when the 'Trojans Dares' sons beheld, 30
The one in flight, the other stretch'd in death,
Their spirits within them quail'd; but Pallas took
The hand of Mars, and thus address'd the God:
" Mars, Mars, thou bane of mortals, blood-stain'd Lord,
Razer of cities, wherefore leave we not 35
The Greeks and Trojans to contend, and see
To which the sire of all will vict'ry give;
While we retire, and shun the wrath of Jove?"

Thus saying, from the battle Mars she led,

And plac'd him on Scamander's steepy banks. 40

The Greeks drove back the Trojan host; the chiefs
Slew each his victim; Agamemnon first,
The mighty monarch, from his chariot hurl'd
Hodius, the sturdy Halizonian chief;

Him, as he turn'd, between the shoulder-blades 45

The jav'lin struck, and through his chest was driv'n;

Thund'ring he fell, and loud his armour rang.

On Phæstus, Borus' son, Mæonian chief,

Who from the fertile plains of Tarna came,

Then sprang Idomeneus; and as he sought 50

To mount upon his car, the Cretan King

Through his right shoulder drove the pointed spear;

He fell; the shades of death his eyes o'erspread,

And of his arms the followers stripp'd his corpse.

The son of Atreus, Menelæus, slew 55

Scamandrius, son of Strophius, sportsman keen,

In woodcraft skilful; for his practis'd hand

Had by Diana's self been taught to slay

Each beast of chase the mountain forest holds.

But nought avail'd him then the Archer-Queen 60

Diana's counsels, nor his boasted art

Of distant aim ; for as he fled, the lance
Of Menelæus, Atreus' warlike son,
Behind his neck, between the shoulder-blades,
His flight arresting, through his chest was driv'n. 65
Headlong he fell, and loud his armour rang.

Phereclus by Meriones was slain,
Son of Harmonides, whose practis'd hand
Knew well to fashion many a work of art ;
By Pallas highly favour'd ; he the ships 70
For Paris built, first origin of ill,
Freighted with evil to the men of Troy,
And to himself, who knew not Heav'n's decrees.
Him, in his headlong flight, in hot pursuit
Meriones o'ertook, and thrust his lance 75
Through his right flank ; beneath the bone was driv'n
The spear, and pierc'd him through : prone on his knees,
Groaning, he fell, and death his eyelids clos'd.

Meges Pedæus slew, Antenor's son,
A bastard born, but by Theano rear'd 80
With tender care, and nurtur'd as her son,
With her own children, for her husband's sake.
Him, Phyleus' warrior son, approaching near,

Thrust through the junction of the head and neck;
Crash'd through his teeth the spear beneath the tongue; 85
Prone in the dust he gnash'd the brazen point.

Eurypylus, Euæmon's noble son,
Hypsenor slew, the worthy progeny
Of Dolopion brave; Scamander's priest,
And by the people as a God rever'd: 90

Him, as he fled before him, from behind
Eurypylus, Euæmon's noble son,
Smote with the sword; and from the shoulder-point
The brawny arm he sever'd; to the ground
Down fell the gory hand; the darkling shades 95
Of death, and rig'rous doom, his eyelids clos'd.

Thus labour'd they amid the stubborn fight;
But of Tydides none might say to whom
His arm belong'd, or whether with the hosts
Of Troy or Greece he mingled in the fight: 100
Hither and thither o'er the plain he rush'd,
Like to a wintry stream, that brimming o'er
Breaks down its barriers in its rapid course;
Nor well-built bridge can stem the flood, nor fence
That guards the fertile fields, as down it pours 105

Its sudden torrent, swoll'n with rain from Heav'n,
And many a goodly work of man destroys :
So back were borne before Tydides' might
The serried ranks of Troy, nor dar'd await,
Despite their numbers, his impetuous charge. 110

Him when Lycaon's noble son beheld
Careering o'er the plain, the serried ranks
Driving before him, quick at Tydeus' son
He bent his bow; and onward as he rush'd,
On the right shoulder, near the breastplate's joint, 115
The stinging arrow struck; right through it pass'd,
And held its way, that blood the breastplate stain'd.
Then shouted loud Lycaon's noble son :

"Arouse ye, valiant Trojans, ye who goad
Your flying steeds; the bravest of the Greeks 120
Is wounded, nor, I deem, can long withstand
My weapon, if indeed from Lycia's shore
By Phoebus' counsel sent I join'd the war."

Thus he, vain-glorious; but not so was quell'd
The godlike chief; back he withdrew, and stood 125
Beside his car, and thus to Sthenelus,
The son of Capaneus, his speech address'd :

“Up, gentle son of Capaneus, descend
From off the car, and from my shoulder draw
This stinging arrow forth.” He said, and down 130
Leap’d from the chariot Sthenelus, and stood
Beside him; and as forth he drew the shaft,
Gush’d out the blood, and dyed the twisted mail.
Then thus the valiant son of Tydeus pray’d:
“Hear me, thou child of ægis-bearing Jove, 135
Unconquer’d! if amid the deadly fight
Thy friendly aid my father e’er sustain’d,
Let me in turn thy favour find; and grant
Within my reach and compass of my spear
That man may find himself, who unawares 140
Hath wounded me, and vainly boasting deems
I shall not long behold the light of day.”
Thus pray’d the chief, and Pallas heard his pray’r;
To all his limbs, to feet and hands alike,
She gave fresh vigour; and with wingèd words, 145
Beside him as she stood, address’d him thus:
“Go fearless onward, Diomed, to meet
The Trojan hosts; for I within thy breast
Thy father’s dauntless courage have infus’d,

Such as of old in Tydeus' bosom dwelt, 150

Bold horseman, buckler-clad; and from thine eyes

The film that dimm'd them I have purg'd away,

That thou mayst well 'twixt Gods and men discern.

If then some God make trial of thy force,

With other of th' Immortals fight thou not; 155

But should Jove's daughter Venus dare the fray,

Thou needst not shun at her to cast thy spear."

This said, the blue-ey'd Goddess disappear'd.

Forthwith again amid the foremost ranks

Tydides mingled; keenly as before 160

His spirit against the Trojans burn'd to fight,

With threefold fury now he sought the fray.

As when a hungry lion has o'erleap'd

The sheepfold; him the guardian of the flock

Has wounded, not disabled; by his wound 165

To rage excited, but not forc'd to fly,

The fold he enters, scares the trembling sheep,

That, closely huddled, each on other press,

Then pounces on his prey, and leaps the fence:

So pounc'd Tydides on the Trojan host. 170

Astynōus and Hypeiron then he slew,

His people's guardian; through the breast of one
He drove his spear, and with his mighty sword
He smote the other on the collar-bone,
The shoulder sev'ring from the neck and back. 175
Them left he there to lie; of Abas then
And Polyeidus went in hot pursuit,
Sons of Eurydamas, an aged seer,
Whose visions stay'd them not; but both were doom'd
A prey to valiant Diomed to fall. 180
Xanthus and Thöon then the hero slew,
The sons of Phænops, children of his age:
He, worn with years, no other sons begot,
Heirs of his wealth; they two together fell,
And to their father left a load of grief, 185
That from the battle they return'd not home,
And distant kindred all his substance shar'd.
On Chromius and Echemon next he fell,
Two sons of Priam on one chariot borne;
And as a lion springs upon a herd, 190
And breaks the neck of heifer or of steer,
Feeding in woodland glade; with such a spring
These two, in vain resisting, from their car

Tydidēs hurl'd; then stripp'd their arms, and bade
His followers lead their horses to the ships. 195

Him when Æneas saw amid the ranks
Dealing destruction, through the fight and throng
Of spears he plung'd, if haply he might find
The godlike Pandarus; Lycaon's son,
Strong and of courage unprov'd, he found, 200
And stood before him, and address'd him thus:
"Where, Pandarus, are now thy wing'd shafts,
Thy bow, and well-known skill, wherein with thee
Can no man here contend? nor Lycia boasts,
Through all her wide-spread plains, a truer aim; 205
Then raise to Jove thy hands, and with thy shaft
Strike down this chief, whoe'er he be, that thus
Is making fearful havoc in our host,
Relaxing many a warrior's limbs in death:
If he be not indeed a God, incens'd 210
Against the Trojans for neglected rites;
For fearful is the vengeance of a God."

Whom answer'd thus Lycaon's noble son:
"Æneas, chief and councillor of Troy,
Most like in all respects to Tydeus' son 215

He seems; his shield I know, and visor'd helm,
And horses; whether he himself be God,
I cannot tell; but if he be indeed
The man I think him, Tydeus' valiant son,
He fights not thus without the aid of Heav'n; 220
But by his side, his shoulders veil'd in cloud,
Some God attends his steps, and turns away
The shaft that just hath reach'd him; for ev'n now
A shaft I shot, which by the breastplate's joint
Pierc'd his right shoulder through: full sure I deem'd 225
That shaft had sent him to the shades, and yet
It slew him not; 'tis sure some angry God.
Nor horse have I, nor car on which to mount;
But in my sire Lycaon's wealthy house
Elev'n fair chariots stand, all newly built, 230
Each with its cover; by the side of each
Two steeds on rye and barley white are fed;
And in his well-built house, when here I came,
Lycaon, aged warrior, urg'd me oft,
With horses and with chariots high upborne, 235
To lead the Trojans in the stubborn fight;
I hearken'd not—'twere better if I had—

Yet fear'd I lest my horses, wont to feed
In plenty unstinted, by the soldiers' wants
Might of their custom'd forage be depriv'd; 240
I left them there, and hither came on foot,
And trusting to my bow: vain trust, it seems;
Two chiefs already have I struck, the sons
Of Tydeus and of Atreus; with true aim
Drawn blood from both, yet but increas'd their rage. 245
Sad was the hour when down from where it hung
I took my bow, and hasting to the aid
Of godlike Hector, hither led my troops;
But should I e'er return, and see again
My native land, my wife, my lofty hall, 250
Then may a stranger's sword cut off my head,
If with these hands I shatter not, and burn,
The bow that thus hath fail'd me at my need."

Then answer'd thus Æneas, chief of Troy:
"Speak thou not thus; our fortunes shall not change" 255
Till thou and I, with chariot and with horse,
This chief encounter, and his prowess prove;
Then mount my chariot, that thyself mayst see,
Hither and thither, in pursuit or flight,

How swift our Trojan horses scour the plain. 260
So if the victory to Diomed,
The son of Tydeus, should by Jove be giv'n,
We yet may safely reach the walls of Troy.
Take thou the whip and reins, while I descend
To fight on foot; or thou the chief engage, 265
And leave to me the conduct of the car."

Whom answer'd thus Lycaon's noble son:
"Æneas, of thy horses and thy car
Take thou the charge; beneath th' accustom'd hand,
With more assurance would they draw the car, 270
If we from Tydeus' son be forc'd to fly;
Nor, struck with panic, and thy voice unheard,
Refuse to bear us from the battle-field;
Then should ourselves be slain, and Tydeus' son
In triumph drive thy horses to the ships. 275
But thou thy horses and thy chariot guide,
While I his onset with my lance receive."

Thus saying, on the car they mounted both,
And tow'rd Tydides urg'd their eager steeds.
Them Sthenelus beheld, the noble son 280
Of Capaneus, and to Tydides cried:

“ Oh son of Tydeus, dearest to my soul,
Two men I see, of might invincible,
Impatient to engage thee; Pandarus,
Well skill'd in archery, Lycaon's son; 285
With him Æneas, great Anchises' son,
Who from immortal Venus boasts his birth.
Then let us timely to the car retreat,
Lest, moving thus amid the foremost ranks,
Thy daring pay the forfeit of thy life.” 290

To whom brave Diomed with stern regard:
“ Talk not to me of flight! I heed thee not!
It is not in my nature so to fight
With skulking artifice and faint retreat;
My strength is yet unbroken; I should shame 295
To mount the car; but forward will I go
To meet these chiefs' encounter; for my soul
Pallas forbids the touch of fear to know.
Nor shall their horses' speed procure for both
A safe return, though one escape my arm. 300
This too I say, and bear my words in mind;
By Pallas' counsel if my hap should be
To slay them both, leave thou my horses here,

The reins attaching to the chariot-rail,
And seize, and from the Trojans to the ships 305
Drive off the horses in Æneas' car;
From those descended, which all-seeing Jove
On Tros, for Ganymede his son, bestow'd:
With these may none beneath the sun compare.
Anchises, King of men, the breed obtain'd 310
By cunning, to the horses sending mares
Without the knowledge of Laomedon.
Six colts were thus engender'd: four of these
In his own stalls he rear'd; the other two
Gave to Æneas, fear-inspiring chief: 315
These could we win, our praise were great indeed."

Such converse while they held, the twain approach'd,
Their horses urg'd to speed; then thus began,
To Diomed, Lycaon's noble son:

"Great son of Tydeus, warrior brave and skill'd, 320
My shaft, it seems, has fail'd to reach thy life;
Try we then now what hap attends my spear."
He said; and, poising, hurl'd his pond'rous spear,
And struck Tydides' shield; right through the shield
Drove the keen weapon, and the breastplate reach'd. 325

Then shouted loud Lycaon's noble son:

"Thou hast it through the flank, nor canst thou long
Survive the blow; great glory now is mine."

To whom, unmov'd, the valiant Diomed:

"Thine aim has fail'd, I am not touch'd; and now 330
I deem we part not hence till one of ye
Glut with his blood th' insatiate Lord of War."

He said: the spear, by Pallas guided, struck
Beside the nostril, underneath the eye;
Crash'd through the teeth, and cutting through the tongue
Beneath the angle of the jaw came forth: 336
Down from the car he fell; and loudly rang
His glittering arms: aside the startled steeds
Sprang devious: from his limbs the spirit fled.
Down leap'd Æneas, spear and shield in hand, 340
Against the Greeks to guard the valiant dead;
And like a lion, fearless in his strength,
Around the corpse he stalk'd, this way and that,
His spear and buckler round before him held,
To all who dar'd approach him threat'ning death, 345
With fearful shouts; a rocky fragment then
Tydides lifted up, a mighty mass,

Which scarce two men could raise, as men are now :

But he, unaided, lifted it with ease.

With this he smote Æneas near the groin, 350

Where the thigh-bone, inserted in the hip,

Turns in the socket-joint; the rugged mass

The socket crush'd, and both the tendons broke,

And tore away the flesh : down on his knees,

Yet resting on his hand, the hero fell ; 355

And o'er his eyes the shades of darkness spread.

Then had Æneas, King of men, been slain,

Had not his mother, Venus, child of Jove,

Who to Anchises, where he fed his flocks,

The hero bore, his peril quickly seen : 360

Around her son she threw her snowy arms,

And with a veil, thick-folded, wrapt him round,

From hostile spears to guard him, lest some Greek

Should pierce his breast, and rob him of his life.

She from the battle thus her son remov'd ; 365

Nor did the son of Capaneus neglect

The strict injunction by Tydides giv'n ;

His reins attaching to the chariot-rail,

Far from the battle-din he check'd, and left,

His own fleet steeds; then rushing forward, seiz'd, 370
And from the Trojans tow'rd the camp drove off,
The sleek-skinn'd horses of Æneas' car.

These to Deipylus, his chosen friend,
He gave, of all his comrades best esteem'd,
Of soundest judgment, tow'rd the ships to drive. 375

Then, his own car remounting, seiz'd the reins,
And urg'd with eager haste his fiery steeds,
Seeking Tydides; he, meanwhile, press'd on

In keen pursuit of Venus; her he knew
A weak, unwarlike Goddess, not of those 380
That like Bellona fierce, or Pallas, range
Exulting through the blood-stain'd fields of war.

Her, searching through the crowd, at length he found,
And springing forward, with his pointed spear
A wound inflicted on her tender hand. 385

Piercing th' ambrosial veil, the Graces' work,
The sharp spear graz'd her palm below the wrist.
Forth from the wound th' immortal current flow'd,

Pure ichor, life-stream of the blessed Gods;
They eat no bread, they drink no ruddy wine, 390
And bloodless thence and deathless they become.

The Goddess shriek'd aloud, and dropp'd her son;
But in his arms Apollo bore him off
In a thick cloud envelop'd, lest some Greek
Might pierce his breast, and rob him of his life. 395
Loud shouted brave Tydides, as she fled:

"Daughter of Jove, from battle-fields retire;
Enough for thee weak women to delude;
If war thou seek'st, the lesson thou shalt learn
Shall cause thee shudder but to hear it nam'd." 400

Thus he; but ill at ease, and sorely pain'd,
The Goddess fled: her, Iris, swift as wind,
Caught up, and from the tumult bore away,
Weeping with pain, her fair skin soil'd with blood.

Mars on the left hand of the battle-field 405
She found, his spear reclining by his side,
And, veil'd in cloud, his car and flying steeds.
Kneeling, her brother she besought to lend
The flying steeds, with golden frontlets crown'd:

"Dear brother, aid me hence, and lend thy car 410
To bear me to Olympus, seat of Gods;
Great is the pain I suffer from a wound
Receiv'd from Diomed, a mortal man,

Who now would dare with Jove himself to fight."

He lent the steeds, with golden frontlets crown'd; 415

In deep distress she mounted on the car:

Beside her Iris stood, and took the reins,

And urg'd the coursers; nothing loth, they flew,

And soon to high Olympus, seat of Gods,

They came: swift Iris there the coursers stay'd, 420

Loos'd from the chariot, and before them plac'd

Ambrosial forage: on her mother's lap,

Dione, Venus fell; she in her arms

Embrac'd, and sooth'd her with her hand, and said:

"Which of the heav'nly pow'rs hath wrong'd thee thus, 425

My child, as guilty of some open shame?"

Whom answer'd thus the laughter-loving Queen:

"The haughty son of Tydeus, Diomed,

Hath wounded me, because my dearest son,

Æneas, from the field I bore away. 430

No more 'twixt Greeks and Trojans is the fight,

But with the Gods themselves the Greeks contend."

To whom Dione, heav'nly Goddess, thus:

"Have patience, dearest child; though much enforc'd,

Restrain thine anger: we, in Heav'n who dwell, 435

Have much to bear from mortals; and ourselves
Too oft upon each other suff'rings lay.
Mars had his suff'rings; by Alœus' sons,
Otus and Ephialtes, strongly bound,
He thirteen months in brazen fetters lay: 440
And there had pin'd away the God of War,
Insatiate Mars, had not their step-mother,
The beauteous Eriboea, sought the aid
Of Hermes; he by stealth releas'd the God,
Sore worn and wasted by his galling chains. 445
Juno too suffer'd, when Amphytrion's son
Through her right breast a three-barb'd arrow sent:
Dire, and unheard of, were the pangs she bore.
Great Pluto's self the stinging arrow felt,
When that same son of ægis-bearing Jove 450
Assail'd him in the very gates of hell,
And wrought him keenest anguish; pierc'd with pain
To high Olympus, to the courts of Jove,
Groaning, he came; the bitter shaft remain'd
Deep in his shoulder fix'd, and griev'd his soul. 455
But soon with soothing ointments Pæon's hand
(For death on him was pow'rless) heal'd the wound.

Accurs'd was he, of daring over-bold,
Reckless of evil deeds, who with his bow
Assail'd the Gods, who on Olympus dwell. 460
The blue-ey'd Pallas, well I know, has urg'd
Tydides to assail thee; fool and blind!
Unknowing he how short his term of life
Who fights against the Gods! for him no child
Upon his knees shall lisp a father's name, 465
Safe from the war and battle-field return'd.
Brave as he is, let Diomed beware
He meet not with a mightier than himself.
Then fair Ægiale, Adrastus' child,
The noble wife of valiant Diomed, 470
Shall long, with lamentations loud, disturb
The slumbers of her house, and vainly mourn
Her youthful Lord, the bravest of the Greeks."
She said; and wip'd the ichor from the wound;
The hand was heal'd, the grievous pains allay'd. 475
But Juno and Minerva, looking on,
With words of bitter mock'ry Saturn's son
Provok'd: and thus the blue-ey'd Goddess spoke:
"O Father! may I speak without offence?"

Venus, it seems, has sought to lead astray 480
Some Grecian woman, and persuade to join
Those Trojans, whom she holds in high esteem;
And as her hand the gentle dame caress'd,
A golden clasp has scratch'd her slender arm."

Thus she: and smil'd the Sire of Gods and men; 485
He call'd the golden Venus to his side,
And, "Not to thee, my child," he said, "belong
The deeds of war; do thou bestow thy care
On deeds of love, and tender marriage ties;
But leave to Mars and Pallas feats of arms." 490

Such converse while they held, brave Diomed
Again assail'd Æneas; well he knew
Apollo's guardian hand around him thrown;
Yet by the God undaunted, on he press'd
To slay Æneas, and his arms obtain. 495
Thrice was his onset made, with murd'rous aim;
And thrice Apollo struck his glitt'ring shield;
But when, with godlike force, he sought to make
His fourth attempt, the Far-destroyer spoke
In terms of awful menace: "Be advis'd, 500
Tydides, and retire; nor as a God

Thyself esteem; since not alike the race
Of Gods immortal and of earth-born men."

He said; and Diomed a little way
Before the Far-destroyer's wrath retir'd: 505

Apollo then Æneas bore away
Far from the tumult; and in Pergamus,
Where stood his sacred shrine, bestow'd him safe.

Latona there, and Dian, Archer-Queen,
In the great temple's innermost recess, 510

Gave to his wounds their care, and sooth'd his pride.

Meanwhile Apollo of the silver bow

A phantom form prepar'd, the counterpart

Of great Æneas, and alike in arms:

Around the form, of Trojans and of Greeks, 515

Loud was the din of battle; fierce the strokes

That fell on rounded shield of tough bull's-hide,

And lighter targe, before each warrior's breast.

Then thus Apollo to the God of War:

"Mars! Mars! thou bane of mortals, blood-stain'd Lord, 520

Razer of cities, wer't not well thyself

To interpose, and from the battle-field

Withdraw this chief, Tydides? such his pride,

He now would dare with Jove himself to fight.

Venus, of late, he wounded in the wrist; 525

And, like a God, but now confronted me."

He said, and sat on Ilium's topmost height:

While Mars, in likeness of the Thracian chief,

Swift Acamas, amid the Trojan ranks

Mov'd to and fro, and urg'd them to the fight. 530

To Priam's Heav'n-descended sons he call'd;

"Ye sons of Priam, Heav'n-descended King,

How long will ye behold your people slain?

Till to your very doors the war be brought?

Æneas, noble-soul'd Anchises' son, 535

In like esteem with Hector held, is down;

On to his aid! our gallant comrade save!"

He said; his words fresh courage gave to all:

Then thus Sarpedon, in reproachful tone,

Address'd the godlike Hector: "Where is now, 540

Hector, the spirit that heretofore was thine?

'Twas once thy boast that ev'n without allies

Thyself, thy brethren, and thy house, alone

The city could defend: for all of these

I look in vain, and see not one; they all, 545

As curs around a lion, cow'r and crouch :
We, strangers and allies, maintain the fight.
I to your aid, from lands afar remote,
From Lycia came, by Xanthus' eddying stream ;
There left a cherish'd wife, and infant son, 550
And rich possessions, which might envy move ;
Yet I my troops encourage ; and myself
Have play'd my part, though nought have I to lose,
Nought that the Greeks could drive or bear away ;
But thou stand'st idly by ; nor bidd'st the rest 555
Maintain their ground, and guard their wives and homes.
Beware lest ye, as in the meshes caught
Of some wide-sweeping net, become the prey
And booty of your foes, who soon shall lay
Your prosp'rous city level with the dust. 560
By day and night should this thy thoughts engage,
With constant pray'r to all thy brave allies,
Firmly to stand, and wipe this shame away."

He said ; and Hector felt the biting speech ;
Down from his car he leap'd ; and through the ranks, 565
Two jav'lins brandishing, he pass'd, to arms
Exciting all, and rais'd his battle-cry.

The tide was turn'd; again they fac'd the Greeks:
In serried ranks the Greeks, undaunted, stood.
As when the wind from off a threshing-floor, 570
Where men are winnowing, blows the chaff away;
When yellow Ceres with the breeze divides
The corn and chaff, which lies in whit'ning heaps;
So thick the Greeks were whiten'd o'er with dust,
Which to the brazen vault of Heav'n arose 575
Beneath the horses' feet, that with the crowd
Were mingled, by their drivers turn'd to flight.
Unwearied still, they bore the brunt; but Mars
The Trojans succouring, the battle-field
Veil'd in thick clouds, from ev'ry quarter brought. 580
Thus he of Phœbus of the golden sword
Obey'd th' injunction, bidding him arouse
The courage of the Trojans, when he saw
Pallas approaching to support the Greeks.
Then from the wealthy shrine Apollo's self 585
Æneas brought, and vigour fresh infus'd:
Amid his comrades once again he stood;
They joy'd to see him yet alive, and sound,
And full of vigour; yet no question ask'd:

No time for question then, amid the toils 590

Impos'd by Phœbus of the silver bow,

And blood-stain'd Mars, and Discord unappeas'd.

Meanwhile Ulysses, and th' Ajaces both,

And Diomed, with courage for the fight

The Grecian force inspir'd; they undismay'd 595

Shrank not before the Trojans' rush and charge;

In masses firm they stood, as when the clouds

Are gather'd round the misty mountain top

By Saturn's son, in breathless calm, while sleep

The force of Boreas and the stormy winds, 600

That with their breath the shadowy clouds disperse;

So stood the Greeks, nor shunn'd the Trojans' charge.

Through all the army Agamemnon pass'd,

And cried, "Brave comrades, quit ye now like men;

Bear a stout heart; and in the stubborn fight, 605

Let each to other mutual succour give;

By mutual succour more are sav'd than fall;

In timid flight nor fame nor safety lies."

Thus he: and straight his jav'lin threw, and struck

A man of mark, Æneas' faithful friend, 610

Deicœon, the son of Pergasus,

By Troy, as ever foremost in the field,
In equal honour held with Priam's sons.
His shield the monarch Agamemnon struck;
The shield's defence was vain; the spear pass'd through 615
Beneath the belt, and in his groin was lodg'd;
Thund'ring he fell, and loud his armour rang.

On th' other side, Æneas slew two chiefs,
The bravest of the Greeks, Orsilochus
And Crethon, sons of Diocles, who dwelt 620
In thriving Phera; rich in substance he,
And from the mighty River Alpheus trac'd
His high descent, who through the Pylian land
His copious waters pours; to him was born
Orsilochus, of num'rous tribes the chief; 625
To him succeeded valiant Diocles;
To whom were born twin sons, Orsilochus
And Crethon, skill'd in ev'ry point of war.
They, in the vigour of their youth, to Troy
Had sail'd amid the dark-ribb'd ships of Greece, 630
Of Atreus' sons the quarrel to uphold;
But o'er them both the shades of death were spread.
As two young lions, by their tawny dam

Nurs'd in the mountain forest's deep recess,
On flocks and herds their youthful fury pour, 635
With havoc to the sheepfolds, till themselves
Succumb, o'ermaster'd by the hand of man:
So fell these two beneath Æneas' hand,
And like two lofty pines in death they lay.

The warlike Menelæus saw their fall 640
With pitying eye; and through the foremost ranks
With brandish'd spear advanc'd, by Mars impell'd,
Who hop'd his death by great Æneas' hand.
Him Nestor's son, Antilochus, beheld,
And hasten'd to his aid; for much he fear'd 645
Lest ill befall the monarch, and his death
Deprive them of their warlike labours' fruit.
They two, with force combin'd of hand and spear,
Press'd onward to the fight; Antilochus
His station keeping close beside the King. 650
Before the two combin'd, Æneas fear'd,
Bold warrior as he was, to hold his ground.
The slain they drew within the Grecian lines,
Plac'd in their comrades' hands, and turning back
Amid the foremost mingled in the fray. 655

Then, brave as Mars, Pylæmenes they slew, ;
The buckler'd Paphlagonians' warlike chief;
Him Menelæus, hand to hand engag'd,
Pierc'd with a spear-thrust through the collar-bone;
While, with a pond'rous stone, Antilochus 660
Full on the elbow smote Atymnius' son,
Mydon, his charioteer, in act to turn
His fiery steeds to flight; down from his hands
Fell to the ground the iv'ry-mounted reins.
On rush'd Antilochus, and with his sword 665
Across the temples smote him; gasping, he
Upon his neck and shoulders from the car
Pitch'd headlong; and (for there the sand was deep)
Awhile stood balanc'd, till the horses' feet
Dash'd him upon the ground; Antilochus, 670
The horses seizing, drove them to the ships.

Hector beheld athwart the ranks, and rush'd,
Loud shouting, to th' encounter; at his back
Follow'd the thronging bands of Troy, by Mars
And fierce Bellona led: she by the hand 675
Wild Uproar held; while Mars a giant spear
Brandish'd aloft; and stalking now before,

Now following after Hector, urg'd them on.

Quail'd at the sight the valiant Diomed :

As when a man, long journeying o'er the plain, 680

All unprepar'd, stands sudden on the brink

Of a swift stream, down rushing to the sea,

Boiling with foam, and back recoils ; so then

Recoil'd Tydides, and address'd the crowd :

" O friends, we marvel at the might display'd 685

By Hector, spearman skill'd and warrior bold ;

But still some guardian God his steps attends,

And shields from danger ; now beside him stands,

In likeness of a mortal, Mars himself.

Then turning still your faces to your foes, 690

Retire, nor venture with the Gods to fight."

He said ; the Trojans now were close at hand,

And, mounted both upon a single car,

Two chiefs, Menesthes and Anchialus,

Well skill'd in war, by Hector's hand were slain. 695

With pitying eyes great Ajax Telamon

Beheld their fall ; advancing close, he threw

His glitt'ring spear ; the son of Selagus

It struck, Amphius, who in Pesus dwelt,

In land and substance rich; by evil fate 700

Impell'd, to Priam's house he brought his aid.

Below the belt the spear of Ajax struck,

And in his groin the point was buried deep;

Thund'ring he fell; then forward Ajax sprang

To seize the spoils of war; but fast and fierce 705

The Trojans show'r'd their weapons bright and keen,

And many a lance the mighty shield receiv'd.

Ajax, his foot firm planted on the slain,

Withdrew the brazen spear; yet could not strip

His armour off, so galling flew the shafts; 710

And much he fear'd the foes might hem him in

Who closely press'd upon him, many and brave;

And, valiant as he was, and tall, and strong,

Still drove him backward; he perforce retir'd.

Thus labour'd they amid the stubborn fight. 715

Then evil fate induc'd Tlepolemus,

Valiant and strong, the son of Hercules,

Heav'n-born Sarpedon to confront in fight.

When near they came, of cloud-compelling Jove

Grandson and son, Tlepolemus began: 720

"Sarpedon, Lycian chief, what brings thee here,

Trembling and crouching, all unskill'd in war?
Falsely they speak who fable thee the son
Of ægis-bearing Jove; so far art thou
Beneath their mark who claim'd in elder days 725
That royal lineage: such my father was,
Of courage resolute, of lion heart.
With but six ships, and with a scanty band,
The horses by Laomedon withheld
Avenging, he o'erthrew this city, Troy, 730
And made her streets a desert; but thy soul
Is poor, thy troops are wasting fast away;
Nor deem I that the Trojans will in thee
(Ev'n were thy valour more) and Lycia's aid
Their safeguard find; but vanquish'd by my hand, 735
This day the gates of Hades thou shalt pass."

To whom the Lycian chief, Sarpedon, thus:
"Tlepolemus, the sacred walls of Troy
Thy sire o'erthrew, by folly of one man,
Laomedon, who with injurious words 740
His noble service recompens'd; nor gave
The promis'd steeds, for which he came from far.
For thee, I deem thou now shalt meet thy doom

Here, at my hand ; on thee my spear shall win
Renown for me, thy soul to Hades send." 745

Thus as Sarpedon spoke, Tlepolemus
Uprais'd his ashen spear ; from both their hands
The pond'rous weapons simultaneous flew.
Full in the throat Tlepolemus receiv'd
Sarpedon's spear ; right through the neck it pass'd, 750
And o'er his eyes the shades of death were spread.
On th' other side his spear Sarpedon struck
On the left thigh ; the eager weapon pass'd
Right through the flesh, and in the bone was fix'd ;
The stroke of death his father turn'd aside. 755
Sarpedon from the field his comrades bore,
By pain o'erpow'r'd, as at the spear they tugg'd ;
None had the skill the weapon to withdraw,
Which baffled all their efforts on the car
To place him : thus they labour'd, but in vain. 760

The Greeks too from the battle-field convey'd
The slain Tlepolemus ; Ulysses saw,
Patient of spirit, but deeply mov'd at heart ;
And with conflicting thoughts his breast was torn,
If first he should pursue the Thund'rer's son, 765

Or deal destruction on the Lycian host.
But fate had not decreed the valiant son
Of Jove to fall beneath Ulysses' hand ;
So on the Lycians Pallas turn'd his wrath.
Alastor then, and Coeranus he slew, 770
Chromius, Alcander, Halius, Prytanis,
Nöemon ; nor had ended then the list
Of Lycian warriors by Ulysses slain ;
But Hector of the glancing helm beheld ;
Through the front ranks he rush'd, with burnish'd crest 775
Resplendent, flashing terror on the Greeks ;
With joy Sarpedon saw his near approach,
And with imploring tones address'd him thus :
 "Hector, thou son of Priam, leave me not
A victim to the Greeks, but lend thine aid : 780
Then in your city let me end my days :
For not to me is giv'n again to see
My native land ; or, safe returning home,
To glad my sorrowing wife and infant child."
 Thus he : but Hector, answ'ring not a word, 785
Pass'd on in silence, hasting to pursue
The Greeks, and pour destruction on their host.

Beneath the oak of ægis-bearing Jove
His faithful comrades laid Sarpedon down,
And from his thigh the valiant Pelagon, 790
His lov'd companion, drew the ashen spear.
He swoon'd, and giddy mists o'erspread his eyes:
But soon reviv'd, as on his forehead blew,
While yet he gasp'd for breath, the cooling breeze.

By Mars and Hector of the brazen helm 795
The Greeks hard-press'd, yet fled not to their ships,
Nor yet sustain'd the fight; but back retir'd
Soon as they learn'd the presence of the God.
Say then who first, who last, the prowess felt
Of Hector, Priam's son, and mail-clad Mars? 800
The godlike Teuthras first, Orestes next,
Bold charioteer; th' Ætolian spearman skill'd,
Trechus, Cœnomæus, and Helenus,
The son of Cœnops; and Oresbius, girt
With sparkling girdle; he in Hyla dwelt, 805
The careful Lord of boundless wealth, beside
Cephisus' marshy banks; Boeotia's chiefs
Around him dwelt, on fat and fertile soil.
Juno, the white-arm'd Queen, who saw these two

The Greeks destroying in the stubborn fight, 810
To Pallas thus her wingèd words address'd:
"O Heav'n! brave child of ægis-bearing Jove,
Vain was our word to Menelæus giv'n,
That he the well-built walls of Troy should raze,
And safe return, if unrestrain'd we leave 815
Ferocious Mars to urge his mad career.
Come then; let us too mingle in the fray."

She said: and Pallas, blue-ey'd Maid, complied.
Offspring of Saturn, Juno, heav'nly Queen,
Herself th' immortal steeds caparison'd, 820
Adorn'd with golden frontlets: to the car
Hebe the circling wheels of brass attach'd,
Eight-spok'd, that on an iron axle turn'd;
The felloes were of gold, and fitted round
With brazen tires, a marvel to behold; 825
The naves were silver, rounded ev'ry way:
The chariot-board on gold and silver bands
Was hung, and round it ran a double rail:
The pole was all of silver; at the end
A golden yoke, with golden yoké-bands fair: 830
And Juno, all on fire to join the fray,

Beneath the yoke the flying coursers led.

Pallas, the child of ægis-bearing Jove,

Within her father's threshold dropp'd her veil,

Of airy texture, work of her own hands; 835

The cuirass donn'd of cloud-compelling Jove,

And stood accoutred for the bloody fray.

Her tassell'd ægis round her shoulders next

She threw, with Terror circled all around;

And on its face were figur'd deeds of arms, 840

And Strife, and Courage high, and panic Rout;

There too a Gorgon's head, of monstrous size,

Frown'd terrible, portent of angry Jove:

And on her head a golden helm she plac'd,

Four-crested, double-peak'd, whose ample verge 845

A hundred cities' champions might suffice:

Her fiery car she mounted: in her hand

A spear she bore, long, weighty, tough; wherewith

The mighty daughter of a mighty sire

Sweeps down the ranks of those her hate pursues. 850

Then Juno sharply touch'd the flying steeds;

Forthwith the gates of Heav'n their portals wide

Spontaneous open'd, guarded by the Hours,

Who Heav'n and high Olympus have in charge
To roll aside, or draw the veil of cloud. 855

Through these th' excited horses held their way.
They found the son of Saturn, from the Gods
Sitting apart, upon the highest crest
Of many-ridg'd Olympus; there arriv'd,
The white-arm'd Goddess Juno stay'd her steeds, 860
And thus address'd the Sov'reign Lord of Heav'n:

“O Father Jove! canst thou behold unmov'd
The violence of Mars? how many Greeks,
Reckless and uncontroll'd, he hath destroy'd;
To me a source of bitter grief; meanwhile 865
Venus and Phœbus of the silver bow
Look on, well pleas'd, who sent this madman forth,
To whom both law and justice are unknown.
Say, Father Jove, shall I thine anger move,
If with disgrace I drive him from the field?” 870

To whom the Cloud-compeller thus replied:
“Go, send against him Pallas; she, I know,
Hath oft inflicted on him grievous pain.”

He said: the white-arm'd Queen with joy obey'd:
She urg'd her horses; nothing loth, they flew 875

Midway between the earth and starry Heav'n :
Far as his sight extends, who from on high
Looks from his watch-tow'r o'er the dark-blue sea,
So far at once the neighing horses bound.
But when to Troy they came, beside the streams 880
Where Simöis' and Scamander's waters meet,
The white-arm'd Goddess stay'd her flying steeds,
Loos'd from the car, and veil'd in densest cloud.
For them, at bidding of the river-God,
Ambrosial forage grew: the Goddesses, 885
Swift as the wild wood-pigeon's rapid flight,
Sped to the battle-field to aid the Greeks.
But when they reach'd the thickest of the fray,
Where throng'd around the might of Diomed
The bravest and the best, as lions fierce, 890
Or forest-boars, the mightiest of their kind,
There stood the white-arm'd Queen, and call'd aloud,
In form of Stentor, of the brazen voice,
Whose shout was as the shout of fifty men :
 " Shame on ye, Greeks, base cowards ! brave alone 895
In outward semblance ; while Achilles yet
Went forth to battle, from the Dardan gates

The Trojans never ventur'd to advance,
So dreaded they his pond'rous spear; but now
Far from the walls, beside your ships, they fight." 900

She said: her words their drooping courage rous'd.
Meanwhile the blue-ey'd Pallas went in haste
In search of Tydeus' son; beside his car
She found the King, in act to cool the wound
Inflicted by the shaft of Pandarus: 905
Beneath his shield's broad belt the clogging sweat
Oppress'd him, and his arm was faint with toil;
The belt was lifted up, and from the wound
He wip'd the clotted blood: beside the car
The Goddess stood, and touch'd the yoke, and said: 910

"Little like Tydeus' self is Tydeus' son:
Low was his stature, but his spirit was high:
And ev'n when I from combat rashly wag'd
Would fain have kept him back, what time in Thebes
He found himself, an envoy and alone, 915
Without support, among the Thebans all,
I counsell'd him in peace to share the feast:
But by his own impetuous courage led,
He challeng'd all the Thebans to contend

With him in wrestling, and o'erthrew them all 920
With ease; so mighty was the aid I gave.
Thee now I stand beside, and guard from harm,
And bid thee boldly with the Trojans fight.
But, if the labours of the battle-field
O'ertask thy limbs, or heartless fear restrain, 925
No issue thou of valiant Tydeus' loins."

Whom answer'd thus the valiant Diomed:
"I know thee, Goddess, who thou art; the child
Of ægis-bearing Jove: to thee my mind
I freely speak, nor aught will I conceal. 930
Nor heartless fear, nor hesitating doubt,
Restrain me; but I bear thy words in mind,
With other of th' Immortals not to fight:
But should Jove's daughter, Venus, dare the fray,
At her I need not shun to throw my spear. 935
Therefore I thus withdrew, and others too
Exhorted to retire, since Mars himself
I saw careering o'er the battle-field."

To whom the blue-ey'd Goddess, Pallas, thus:
"Thou son of Tydeus, dearest to my soul, 940
Fear now no more with Mars himself to fight,

Nor other God; such aid will I bestow.
Come then; at him the first direct thy car;
Encounter with him hand to hand; nor fear
To strike this madman, this incarnate curse, 945
This shameless renegade; who late agreed
With Juno and with me to combat Troy,
And aid the Grecian cause; who now appears.
The Greeks deserting, in the Trojan ranks."

Thus Pallas spoke, and stretching forth her hand, 950
Backward his comrade Sthenelus she drew
From off the chariot; down in haste he sprang.
His place beside the valiant Diomed
The eager Goddess took; beneath the weight
Loud groan'd the oaken axle; for the car 955
A mighty Goddess and a Hero bore.
Then Pallas took the whip and reins, and urg'd
Direct at Mars the fiery coursers' speed.

The bravest of th' Ætolians, Periphas,
Ochesius' stalwart son, he just had slain, 960
And stood in act to strip him of his arms.
The helmet then of Darkness Pallas donn'd,
To hide her presence from the sight of Mars:

But when the blood-stain'd God of War beheld
Advancing tow'rd him godlike Diomed, 965
The corpse of stalwart Periphas he left,
There where he fell, to lie; while he himself
Of valiant Diomed th' encounter met.

When near they came, first Mars his pond'rous spear
Advanc'd beyond the yoke and horses' reins, 970
With murd'rous aim; but Pallas from the car
Turn'd it aside, and foil'd the vain attempt.

Then Diomed thrust forward in his turn
His pond'rous spear; low on the flank of Mars,
Guided by Pallas, with successful aim, 975
Just where the belt was girt, the weapon struck:
It pierc'd the flesh, and straight was back withdrawn:
Then Mars cried out aloud, with such a shout
As if nine thousand or ten thousand men
Should simultaneous raise their battle-cry: 980
Trojans and Greeks alike in terror heard,
Trembling; so fearful was the cry of Mars.
As black with clouds appears the darken'd air,
When after heat the blust'ring winds arise,
So Mars to valiant Diomed appear'd, 985

As in thick clouds he took his heav'nward flight.
With speed he came to great Olympus' heights,
Th' abode of Gods; and sitting by the throne
Of Saturn's son, with anguish torn, he show'd
Th' immortal stream that trickled from the wound, 990
And thus to Jove his piteous words address'd:

“O Father Jove, canst thou behold unmov'd
These acts of violence? the greatest ills
We Gods endure, we each to other owe
Who still in human quarrels interpose. 995
Of thee we all complain; thy senseless child
Is ever on some evil deed intent.
The other Gods, who on Olympus dwell,
Are all to thee obedient and submit;
But thy pernicious daughter, nor by word 1000
Nor deed dost thou restrain; who now excites
Th' o'erbearing son of Tydeus, Diomed,
Upon th' immortal Gods to vent his rage.
Venus of late he wounded in the wrist,
And, as a God, but now encounter'd me: 1005
Barely I 'scap'd by swiftness of my feet;
Else, 'mid a ghastly heap of corpses slain,

In anguish had I lain; and, if alive,
Yet liv'd disabled by his weapon's stroke."

Whom answer'd thus the Cloud-compeller, Jove, 1010
With look indignant: "Come no more to me,
Thou wav'ring turncoat, with thy whining pray'rs:
Of all the Gods who on Olympus dwell
I hate thee most; for thou delight'st in nought
But strife and war; thou hast inherited 1015
Thy mother, Juno's, proud, unbending mood,
Whom I can scarce control; and thou, methinks,
To her suggestions ow'st thy present plight.
Yet since thou art my offspring, and to me
Thy mother bore thee, I must not permit 1020
That thou shouldst long be doom'd to suffer pain;
But had thy birth been other than it is,
For thy misdoings thou hadst long ere now
Been banish'd from the Gods' companionship."

He said: and straight to Pæon gave command 1025
To heal the wound; with soothing anodynes
He heal'd it quickly; soon as liquid milk
Is curdled by the fig-tree's juice, and turns
In whirling flakes, so soon was heal'd the wound.

By Hebe bath'd, and rob'd afresh, he sat 1030

In health and strength restor'd, by Saturn's son.

Mars thus arrested in his murd'rous course,

Together to th' abode of Jove return'd

The Queen of Argos and the blue-ey'd Maid. 1034

BOOK VI.

THE Gods had left the field, and o'er the plain
Hither and thither surg'd the tide of war,
As couch'd th' opposing chiefs their brass-tipp'd spears,
Midway 'twixt Simöis' and Scamander's streams.

First through the Trojan phalanx broke his way 5
The son of Telamon, the prop of Greece,
The mighty Ajax; on his friends the light
Of triumph shedding, as Eusorus' son
He smote, the noblest of the Thracian bands,
Valiant and strong, the gallant Acamas. 10
Full in the front, beneath the plumèd helm,
The sharp spear struck, and crashing through the bone,
The warrior's eyes were clos'd in endless night.

Next valiant Diomed Axylus slew,
The son of Teuthranes, who had his home. 15
In fair Arisba; rich in substance he,
And lov'd of all; for, dwelling near the road,

He op'd to all his hospitable gate ;
But none of all he entertain'd was there
To ward aside the bitter doom of death : 20
There fell they both, he and his charioteer,
Calesius, who athwart the battle-field
His chariot drove ; one fate o'ertook them both.

Then Dresus and Opheltius of their arms
Euryalus despoil'd ; his hot pursuit 25
Æsepus next, and Pedasus assail'd,
Brothers, whom Abarbarea, Naiad nymph,
To bold Bucolion bore ; Bucolion, son
Of great Laomedon, his eldest born,
Though bastard : he upon the mountain side, 30
On which his flocks he tended, met the nymph,
And of their secret loves twin sons were born ;
Whom now at once Euryalus of strength
And life depriv'd, and of their armour stripp'd.

By Polypoetes' hand, in battle strong, 35
Was slain Astyalus ; Pidutes fell,
Chief of Percote, by Ulysses' spear ;
And Teucer godlike Aretaon slew.
Antilochus, the son of Nestor, smote

With gleaming lance Ablerus; Elatus 40

By Agamemnon, King of men, was slain,
Who dwelt by Satnöis' widely-flowing stream,
Upon the lofty heights of Pedasus.

By Lëitus was Phylacus in flight
O'erta'en; Eurypylus Melanthius slew. 45

Then Meneläus, good in battle, took
Adrastus captive; for his horses, scar'd
And rushing wildly o'er the plain, amid
The tangled tamarisk scrub his chariot broke,
Snapping the pole; they with the flying crowd 50

Held city-ward their course; he from the car
Hurl'd headlong, prostrate lay beside the wheel,
Prone on his face in dust; and at his side,
Poising his mighty spear, Atrides stood.
Adrastus clasp'd his knees, and suppliant cried, 55

"Spare me, great son of Atreus! for my life
Accept a price; my wealthy father's house
A goodly store contains of brass, and gold,
And well-wrought iron; and of these he fain
Would pay a noble ransom, could he hear 60
That in the Grecian ships I yet surviv'd."

His words to pity mov'd the victor's breast;
Then had he bade his followers to the ships
The captive bear; but running up in haste,
Fierce Agamemnon cried in stern rebuke; 65

“Soft-hearted Meneläus, why of life
So tender? Hath thy house receiv'd indeed
Nothing but benefits at Trojan hands?
Of that abhorred race, let not a man
Escape the deadly vengeance of our arms; 70
No, not the infant in its mother's womb;
No, nor the fugitive; but be they all,
They and their city, utterly destroy'd,
Uncar'd for, and from mem'ry blotted out.”

Thus as he spoke, his counsel, fraught with death, 75
His brother's purpose chang'd: he with his hand
Adrastus thrust aside, whom with his lance
Fierce Agamemnon through the loins transfix'd;
And, as he roll'd in death, upon his breast
Planting his foot, the ashen spear withdrew. 80

Then loudly Nestor shouted to the Greeks:
“Friends, Grecian heroes, ministers of Mars!
Loiter not now behind, to throw yourselves

Upon the prey, and bear it to the ships;
Let all your aim be now to kill; anon 85
Ye may at leisure spoil your slaughter'd foes."

With words like these he fir'd the blood of all.
Now had the Trojans by the warlike Greeks
In coward flight within their walls been driv'n;
But to Æneas and to Hector thus 90
The son of Priam, Helenus, the best
Of all the Trojan seers, address'd his speech:
" Æneas, and thou Hector, since on you,
Of all the Trojans and the Lycian hosts,
Is laid the heaviest burthen, for that ye 95
Excel alike in council and in fight,
Stand here awhile, and moving to and fro
On ev'ry side, around the gates exhort
The troops to rally, lest they fall disgrac'd,
Flying for safety to their women's arms, 100
And foes, exulting, triumph in their shame.
Their courage thus restor'd, worn as we are,
We with the Greeks will still maintain the fight,
For so, perforce, we must; but, Hector, thou
Haste to the city; there our mother find, 105

Both thine and mine; on Ilium's topmost height
By all the aged dames accompanied,
Bid her the shrine of blue-ey'd Pallas seek;
Unlock the sacred gates; and on the knees
Of fair-hair'd Pallas place the fairest robe 110
In all the house, the amplest, best esteem'd;
And at her altar vow to sacrifice
Twelve yearling kine that never felt the goad,
So she have pity on the Trojan state,
Our wives, and helpless babes, and turn away 115
The fiery son of Tydeus, spearman fierce,
The Minister of Terror; bravest he,
In my esteem, of all the Grecian chiefs;
For not Achilles' self, the prince of men,
Though Goddess-born, such dread inspir'd; so fierce 120
His rage; and with his prowess none may vie."

He said, nor uncomplying, Hector heard
His brother's counsel; from his car he leap'd
In arms upon the plain; and brandish'd high
His jav'lins keen, and moving to and fro 125
The troops encourag'd, and restor'd the fight.
Rallying they turn'd, and fac'd again the Greeks:

These ceas'd from slaughter, and in turn gave way,
Deeming that from the starry Heav'n some God
Had to the rescue come; so fierce they turn'd. 130
Then to the Trojans Hector call'd aloud:

“Ye valiant Trojans, and renown'd Allies,
Quit you like men; remember now, brave friends,
Your wonted valour; I to Ilium go
To bid our wives and rev'rend Elders raise 135
To Heav'n their pray'rs, with vows of hecatombs.”

Thus saying, Hector of the glancing helm
Turn'd to depart; and as he mov'd along,
The black bull's-hide his neck and ancles smote,
The outer circle of his bossy shield. 140

Then Tydeus' son, and Glaucus, in the midst,
Son of Hippolochus, stood forth to fight;
But when they near were met, to Glaucus first
The valiant Diomed his speech address'd:
“Who art thou, boldest man of mortal birth? 145
For in the glorious conflict heretofore
I ne'er have seen thee; but in daring now
Thou far surpasses all, who hast not fear'd
To face my spear; of most unhappy sires

The children they, who my encounter meet. 150

But if from Heav'n thou com'st, and art indeed

A God, I fight not with the heav'nly powers.

Not long did Dryas' son, Lyncurgus brave,

Survive, who dar'd th' Immortals to defy :

He, 'mid their frantic orgies, in the groves 155

Of lovely Nyssa, put to shameful rout

The youthful Bacchus' nurses ; they, in fear,

Dropp'd each her thyrsus, scatter'd by the hand

Of fierce Lyncurgus, with an ox-goad arm'd.

Bacchus himself beneath the ocean wave 160

In terror plung'd, and, trembling, refuge found

In Thetis' bosom from a mortal's threats :

The Gods indignant saw, and Saturn's son

Smote him with blindness ; nor surviv'd he long,

Hated alike by all th' immortal Gods. 165

I dare not then the blessed Gods oppose ;

But be thou mortal, and the fruits of earth

Thy food, approach, and quickly meet thy doom."

To whom the noble Glaucus thus replied :

"Great son of Tydeus, why my race enquire? 170

The race of man is as the race of leaves :

Of leaves, one generation by the wind
Is scatter'd on the earth; another soon
In spring's luxuriant verdure bursts to light.
So with our race; these flourish, those decay. 175
But if thou wouldst in truth enquire and learn
The race I spring from, not unknown of men;
There is a city, in the deep recess
Of pastoral Argos, Ephyre by name:
There Sisyphus of old his dwelling had, 180
Of mortal men the craftiest; Sisyphus,
The son of Æolus; to him was born
Glaucus; and Glaucus in his turn begot
Bellerophon, on whom the Gods bestow'd
The gifts of beauty and of manly grace. 185
But Proetus sought his death; and, mightier far,
From all the coasts of Argos drove him forth,
To Proetus subjected by Jove's decree.
For him the monarch's wife, Antæa, nurs'd
A madd'ning passion, and to guilty love 190
Would fain have tempted him; but fail'd to move
The upright soul of chaste Bellerophon.
With lying words she then address'd the King:

'Die, Proetus, thou, or slay Bellerophon,
Who basely sought my honour to assail.' 195
The King with anger listen'd to her words;
Slay him he would not; that his soul abhorr'd;
But to the father of his wife, the King
Of Lycia, sent him forth, with tokens charg'd
Of dire import, on folded tablets trac'd, 200
Pois'ning the monarch's mind, to work his death.
To Lycia, guarded by the Gods, he went;
But when he came to Lycia, and the streams
Of Xanthus, there with hospitable rites
The King of wide-spread Lycia welcom'd him. 205
Nine days he feasted him, nine oxen slew;
But with the tenth return of rosy morn
He question'd him, and for the tokens ask'd
He from his son-in-law, from Proetus, bore.
The tokens' fatal import understood, 210
He bade him first the dread Chimæra slay;
A monster, sent from Heav'n, not human born,
With head of lion, and a serpent's tail,
And body of a goat; and from her mouth
There issued flames of fiercely-burning fire: 215

Yet her, confiding in the Gods, he slew.
Next, with the valiant Solymi he fought,
The fiercest fight that e'er he undertook.
Thirdly, the women-warriors he o'erthrew,
The Amazons; from whom returning home, 220
The King another stratagem devis'd;
For, choosing out the best of Lycia's sons,
He set an ambush; they return'd not home,
For all by brave Bellerophon were slain.
But, by his valour when the King perceiv'd 225
His heav'nly birth, he entertain'd him well;
Gave him his daughter; and with her the half
Of all his royal honours he bestow'd:
A portion too the Lycians meted out,
Fertile in corn and wine, of all the state 230
The choicest land, to be his heritage.
Three children there to brave Bellerophon
Were born; Isander, and Hippolochus,
Laodamia last, belov'd of Jove,
The Lord of counsel; and to him she bore 235
Godlike Sarpedon of the brazen helm.
Bellerophon at length the wrath incurr'd

Of all the Gods; and to th' Aleian plain
Alone he wander'd; there he wore away
His soul, and shunn'd the busy haunts of men. 240
Insatiate Mars his son Isander slew
In battle with the valiant Solymi:
His daughter perish'd by Diana's wrath.
I from Hippolochus my birth derive:
To Troy he sent me, and enjoin'd me oft 245
To aim at highest honours, and surpass
My comrades all; nor on my father's name
Discredit bring, who held the foremost place
In Ephyre, and Lycia's wide domain.
Such is my race, and such the blood I boast" 250
He said; and Diomed rejoicing heard:
His spear he planted in the fruitful ground;
And thus with friendly words the chief address'd:
"By ancient ties of friendship are we bound;
For godlike Ceneus in his house receiv'd 255
For twenty days the brave Bellerophon;
They many a gift of friendship interchang'd;
A belt, with crimson glowing, Ceneus gave;
Bellerophon a double cup of gold,

Which in my house I left when here I came. 260

Of Tydeus no remembrance I retain;

For yet a child he left me, when he fell

With his Achaians at the gate of Thebes.

So I in Argos am thy friendly host;

Thou mine in Lycia, when I thither come : 265

Then shun we, ev'n amid the thickest fight,

Each other's lance; enough there are for me

Of Trojans and their brave allies to kill,

As Heav'n may aid me, and my speed of foot;

And Greeks enough there are for thee to slay, 270

If so indeed thou canst; but let us now

Our armour interchange, that these may know

What friendly bonds of old our houses join."

Thus as they spoke, they quitted each his car;

Clasp'd hand in hand, and plighted mutual faith. 275

Then Glaucus of his judgment Jove depriv'd,

His armour interchanging, gold for brass,

A hundred oxen's worth for that of nine.

Meanwhile, when Hector reach'd the oak beside

The Scæan gate, around him throng'd the wives 280

Of Troy, and daughters, anxious to enquire

The fate of children, brothers, husbands, friends ;
He to the Gods exhorted all to pray,
For deep the sorrows that o'er many hung.
But when to Priam's splendid house he came, 285
With polish'd corridors adorn'd—within
Were fifty chambers, all of polish'd stone,
Plac'd each by other ; there the fifty sons
Of Priam with their wedded wives repos'd ;
On th' other side, within the court were built 290
Twelve chambers, near the roof, of polish'd stone,
Plac'd each by other ; there the sons-in-law
Of Priam with their spouses chaste repos'd ;
To meet him there his tender mother came,
And with her led the young Laodice, 295
Fairest of all her daughters ; clasping then
His hand, she thus address'd him : “ Why, my son,
Why com'st thou here, and leav'st the battle-field ?
Are Trojans by those hateful sons of Greece,
Fighting around the city, sorely press'd ? 300
And com'st thou, by thy spirit mov'd, to raise
On Ilium's heights, thy hands in pray'r to Jove ?
But tarry till I bring the luscious wine,

That first to Jove, and to th' Immortals all,
Thou mayst thine off'ring pour; then with the draught 305
Thyself thou mayst refresh; for great the strength
Which gen'rous wine imparts to men who toil,
As thou hast toil'd, thy comrades to protect."

To whom great Hector of the glancing helm:
"No, not for me, mine honour'd mother, pour 310
The luscious wine, lest thou unnerve my limbs,
And make me all my wonted prowess lose.
The ruddy wine I dare not pour to Jove
With hands unwash'd; nor to the cloud-girt son
Of Saturn may the voice of pray'r ascend 315
From one with blood bespatter'd and defil'd.
Thou, with the elder women, seek the shrine
Of Pallas; bring your gifts; and on the knees
Of fair-hair'd Pallas place the fairest robe
In all the house, the amplest, best esteem'd; 320
And at her altar vow to sacrifice
Twelve yearling kine, that never felt the goad;
So she have pity on the Trojan state,
Our wives, and helpless babes; and turn away
The fiery son of Tydeus, spearman fierce, 325

The Minister of Terror; to the shrine
Of Pallas thou; to Paris I, to call
If haply he will hear; would that the earth
Would gape and swallow him! for great the curse
That Jove through him hath brought on men of Troy, 330
On noble Priam, and on Priam's sons.
Could I but know that he were in his grave,
Methinks my sorrows I could half forget."

He said: she, to the house returning, sent
Th' attendants through the city, to collect 335
The train of aged suppliants; she meanwhile
Her fragrant chamber sought, wherein were stor'd
Rich garments, by Sidonian women work'd,
Whom godlike Paris had from Sidon brought,
Sailing the broad sea o'er, the selfsame path 340
By which the high-born Helen he convey'd.
Of these, the richest in embroidery,
The amplest, and the brightest, as a star
Refulgent, plac'd with care beneath the rest,
The Queen her off'ring bore to Pallas' shrine: 345
She went, and with her many an ancient dame.
But when the shrine they reach'd on Ilium's height,

Theano, fair of face, the gates unlock'd,
Daughter of Cisseus, sage Antenor's wife,
By Trojans nam'd at Pallas' shrine to serve. 350
They with deep moans to Pallas rais'd their hands;
But fair Theano took the robe, and plac'd
On Pallas' knees, and to the heav'nly Maid,
Daughter of Jove, she thus address'd her pray'r:
"Guardian of cities, Pallas, awful Queen, 355
Goddess of Goddesses, break thou the spear
Of Tydeus' son; and grant that he himself
Prostrate before the Scaean gates may fall;
So at thine altar will we sacrifice
Twelve yearling kine, that never felt the goad, 360
If thou have pity on the state of Troy,
The wives of Trojans, and their helpless babes."

Thus she; but Pallas answer'd not her pray'r.
While thus they call'd upon the heav'nly Maid,
Hector to Paris' mansion bent his way; 365
A noble structure, which himself had built
Aided by all the best artificers
Who in the fertile realm of Troy were known;
With chambers, hall, and court, on Ilium's height,

Near to where Priam's self and Hector dwelt. 370

There enter'd Hector, well belov'd of Jove ;

And in his hand his pond'rous spear he bore,

Twelve cubits long ; bright flash'd the weapon's point

Of polish'd brass, with circling hoop of gold.

There in his chamber found he whom he sought, 375

About his armour busied, polishing

His shield, his breastplate, and his bended bow.

While Argive Helen, 'mid her maidens plac'd,

The skilful labours of their hands o'erlook'd.

To him thus Hector with reproachful words ; 380

"Thou dost not well thine anger to indulge ;

In battle round the city's lofty wall

The people fast are falling ; thou the cause

That fiercely thus around the city burns

The flame of war and battle ; and thyself 385

Wouldst others blame, who from the fight should shrink.

Up, ere the town be wrapp'd in hostile fires."

To whom in answer godlike Paris thus :

"Hector, I own not causeless thy rebuke ;

Yet will I speak ; hear thou and understand ; 390

'Twas less from anger with the Trojan host,

And fierce resentment, that I here remain'd,
Than that I sought my sorrow to indulge;
Yet hath my wife, ev'n now, with soothing words
Urg'd me to join the battle; so, I own, 395
'Twere best; and Vict'ry changes oft her side.
Then stay, while I my armour don; or thou
Go first: I, following, will o'ertake thee soon."

He said: but Hector of the glancing helm
Made answer none; then thus with gentle tones 400
Helen accosted him: "Dear brother mine,
(Of me, degraded, sorrow-bringing, vile!)
Oh that the day my mother gave me birth
Some storm had on the mountains cast me forth!
Or that the many-dashing ocean's waves 405
Had swept me off, ere all this woe were wrought!
Yet if these evils were of Heav'n ordain'd,
Would that a better man had call'd me wife;
A sounder judge of honour and disgrace:
For he, thou know'st, no firmness hath of mind, 410
Nor ever will; a want he well may rue.
But come thou in, and rest thee here awhile,
Dear brother, on this couch; for travail sore

Encompasseth thy soul, by me impos'd,
Degraded as I am, and Paris' guilt; 415
On whom this burthen Heav'n hath laid, that shame
On both our names through years to come shall rest."

To whom great Hector of the glancing helm:
"Though kind thy wish, yet, Helen, ask me not
To sit or rest; I cannot yield to thee: 420
For to the succour of our friends I haste,
Who feel my loss, and sorely need my aid.
But thou thy husband rouse, and let him speed,
That he may find me still within the walls.
For I too homeward go; to see once more 425
My household, and my wife, and infant child:
For whether I may e'er again return,
I know not, or if Heav'n have so decreed,
That I this day by Grecian hands should fall."

Thus saying, Hector of the glancing helm 430
Turn'd to depart; with rapid step he reach'd
His own well-furnish'd house, but found not there
His white-arm'd spouse, the fair Andromache.
She with her infant child and maid the while
Was standing, bath'd in tears, in bitter grief, 435

On Ilium's topmost tower: but when her Lord
Found not within the house his peerless wife,
Upon the threshold pausing, thus he spoke:
"Tell me, my maidens, tell me true, which way
Your mistress went, the fair Andromache; 440
Or to my sisters, or my brothers' wives?
Or to the temple where the fair-hair'd dames
Of Troy invoke Minerva's awful name?"

To whom the matron of his house replied:
"Hector, if truly we must answer thee, 445
Not to thy sisters, nor thy brothers' wives,
Nor to the temple where the fair-hair'd dames
Of Troy invoke Minerva's awful name,
But to the height of Ilium's topmost tow'r
Andromache is gone; since tidings came 450
The Trojan force was overmatch'd, and great
The Grecian strength; whereat, like one distract,
She hurried to the walls, and with her took,
Borne in the nurse's arms, her infant child."

So spoke the ancient dame; and Hector straight 455
Through the wide streets his rapid steps retrac'd.
But when at last the mighty city's length

Was travers'd, and the Scæan gates were reach'd
Whence was the outlet to the plain, in haste
Running to meet him came his priceless wife, 460
Eëtion's daughter, fair Andromache;
Eëtion, who from Thebes Cilicia sway'd,
Thebes, at the foot of Placos' wooded heights.
His child to Hector of the brazen helm
Was giv'n in marriage: she it was who now 465
Met him, and by her side the nurse, who bore,
Clasp'd to her breast, his all unconscious child,
Hector's lov'd infant, fair as morning star;
Whom Hector call'd Scamandrius, but the rest
Astyanax, in honour of his sire, 470
The matchless chief, the only prop of Troy.
Silent he smil'd as on his boy he gaz'd:
But at his side Andromache, in tears,
Hung on his arm, and thus the chief address'd:
"Dear Lord, thy dauntless spirit will work thy doom: 475
Nor hast thou pity on this thy helpless child,
Or me forlorn, to be thy widow soon:
For thee will all the Greeks with force combin'd
Assail and slay: for me, 'twere better far,

Of thee bereft, to lie beneath the sod ; 480
Nor comfort shall be mine, if thou be lost,
But endless grief ; to me nor sire is left,
Nor honour'd mother ; fell Achilles' hand
My sire Eëtion slew, what time his arms
The populous city of Cilicia raz'd, 485
The lofty-gated Thebes ; he slew indeed,
But stripp'd him not ; he reverenc'd the dead ;
And o'er his body, with his armour burnt,
A mound erected ; and the mountain nymphs,
The progeny of ægis-bearing Jove, 490
Planted around his tomb a grove of elms.
There were sev'n brethren in my father's house ;
All in one day they fell, amid their herds
And fleecy flocks, by fierce Achilles' hand.
My mother, Queen of Placos' wooded height, 495
Brought with the captives here, he soon releas'd
For costly ransom ; but by Dian's shafts
She, in her father's house, was stricken down.
But, Hector, thou to me art all in one,
Sire, mother, brethren ! thou, my wedded love ! 500
Then pitying us, within the tow'r remain,

Nor make thy child an orphan, and thy wife
A hapless widow ; by the fig-tree here
Array thy troops ; for here the city wall,
Easiest of access, most invites assault. 505
Thrice have their boldest chiefs this point assail'd,
The two Ajaces, brave Idomeneus,
Th' Atridae both, and Tydeus' warlike son,
Or by the prompting of some Heav'n-taught seer,
Or by their own advent'rous courage led." 510

To whom great Hector of the glancing helm :
" Think not, dear wife, that by such thoughts as these
My heart has ne'er been wrung ; but I should blush
To face the men and long-rob'd dames of Troy,
If, like a coward, I could shun the fight. 515
Nor could my soul the lessons of my youth
So far forget, whose boast it still has been
In the fore-front of battle to be found,
Charg'd with my father's glory and mine own.
Yet in my inmost soul too well I know, 520
The day must come when this our sacred Troy,
And Priam's race, and Priam's royal self,
Shall in one common ruin be o'erthrown.

But not the thoughts of Troy's impending fate,
Nor Hecuba's nor royal Priam's woes, 525
Nor loss of brethren, numerous and brave,
By hostile hands laid prostrate in the dust,
So deeply wring my heart as thoughts of thee,
Thy days of freedom lost, and led away
A weeping captive by some brass-clad Greek ; 530
Haply in Argos, at a mistress' beck,
Condemn'd to ply the loom, or water draw
From Hypereia's or Messëis' fount,
Heart-wrung, by stern necessity constrain'd.
Then they who see thy tears perchance may say, 535
'Lo! this was Hector's wife, who, when they fought
On plains of Troy, was Ilium's bravest chief.'
Thus may they speak; and thus thy grief renew
For loss of him, who might have been thy shield
To rescue thee from slav'ry's bitter hour. 540
Oh may I sleep in dust, ere be condemn'd
To hear thy cries, and see thee dragg'd away!"

Thus as he spoke, great Hector stretch'd his arms
To take his child; but back the infant shrank,
Crying, and sought his nurse's shelt'ring breast, 545

Scar'd by the brazen helm and horse-hair plume,
That nodded, fearful, on the warrior's crest.
Laugh'd the fond parents both, and from his brow
Hector the casque remov'd, and set it down,
All glitt'ring, on the ground; then kiss'd his child, 550
And danc'd him in his arms; then thus to Jove
And to th' Immortals all address'd his pray'r:
"Grant, Jove, and all ye Gods, that this my son
May be, as I, the foremost man of Troy,
For valour fam'd, his country's guardian King; 555
That men may say, 'This youth surpasses far
His father,' when they see him from the fight,
From slaughter'd foes, with bloody spoils of war
Returning, to rejoice his mother's heart!"

Thus saying, in his mother's arms he plac'd 560
His child; she to her fragrant bosom clasp'd,
Smiling through tears; with eyes of pitying love
Hector beheld, and press'd her hand, and thus
Address'd her—"Dearest, wring not thus my heart!
For till my day of destiny is come, 565
No man may take my life; and when it comes,
Nor brave nor coward can escape that day.

But go thou home, and ply thy household cares,
The loom and distaff, and appoint thy maids
Their sev'ral tasks; and leave to men of Troy 570
And, chief of all to me, the toils of war."

Thus as he spoke, his horsehair-plumèd helm
Great Hector took; and homeward turn'd his wife
With falt'ring steps, and shedding scalding tears.
Arriv'd at valiant Hector's well-built house, 575
Her maidens press'd around her; and in all
Arose at once the sympathetic grief.

For Hector, yet alive, his household mourn'd,
Deeming he never would again return,
Safe from the fight, by Grecian hands unharm'd. 580

Nor linger'd Paris in his lofty halls;

But donn'd his armour, glitt'ring o'er with brass,
And through the city pass'd with bounding steps.
As some proud steed, at well-fill'd manger fed,
His halter broken, neighing, scours the plain, 585
And revels in the widely-flowing stream
To bathe his sides; then tossing high his head,
While o'er his shoulders streams his ample mane,
Light borne on active limbs, in conscious pride,

To the wide pastures of the mares he flies; 590

So Paris, Priam's son, from Ilium's height,

His bright arms flashing like the gorgeous sun,

Hasten'd, with boastful mien, and rapid step.

Hector he found, as from the spot he turn'd

Where with his wife he late had converse held; 595

Whom thus the godlike Paris first address'd:

"Too long, good brother, art thou here detain'd,

Impatient for the fight, by my delay;

Nor have I timely, as thou had'st me, come."

To whom thus Hector of the glancing helm: 600

"My gallant brother, none who thinks aright

Can cavil at thy prowess in the field;

For thou art very valiant; but thy will

Is weak and sluggish; and it grieves my heart,

When from the Trojans, who in thy behalf 605

Such labours undergo, I hear thy name

Coupled with foul reproach! But go we now!

Henceforth shall all be well, if Jove permit

That from our shores we chase th'invading Greeks,

And to the ever-living Gods of Heav'n 610

In peaceful homes our free libations pour." 611

BOOK VII.

THUS as he spoke, from out the city gates
The noble Hector pass'd, and by his side
His brother Paris; in the breast of both
Burnt the fierce ardour of the battle-field.
As when some God a fav'ring breeze bestows 5
On seamen tugging at the well-worn oar,
Faint with excess of toil, ev'n so appear'd
Those brethren twain to Troy's o'erlabour'd host.

Then to their prowess fell, by Paris' hand
Menesthius, royal Arëithōus' son, 10
Whom to the King, in Arna, where he dwelt,
The stag-ey'd dame Phylomedusa bore;
While Hector smote, with well-directed spear,
Beneath the brass-bound headpiece, through the throat,
Eïoneus, and slack'd his limbs in death; 15
And Glaucus, leader of the Lycian bands,

Son of Hippolochus, amid the fray
Iphinöus, son of Dexias, borne on high
By two fleet mares upon a lofty car,
Pierc'd through the shoulder; from the car he fell 20
Prone to the earth, his limbs relax'd in death.
But them when Pallas saw, amid the fray
Dealing destruction on the hosts of Greece,
From high Olympus to the walls of Troy
She came in haste; Apollo there she found, 25
As down he look'd from Ilium's topmost tow'r,
Devising vict'ry to the arms of Troy.
Beside the oak they met; Apollo first,
The son of Jove, the colloquy began:
" Daughter of Jove, from great Olympus' heights, 30
Why com'st thou here, by angry passion led?
Wouldst thou the vict'ry, swaying here and there,
Give to the Greeks? since pitiless thou see'st
The Trojans slaughter'd? Be advis'd by me,
For so 'twere better; cause we for to-day 35
The rage of battle and of war to cease;
To-morrow morn shall see the fight renew'd,
Until the close of Ilium's destiny;

For so ye Goddesses have wrought your will,
That this fair city should in ruin fall." 40

To whom the blue-ey'd Goddess thus replied :
" So be it, Archer-King ; with like intent
I from Olympus came ; but say, what means
Wilt thou devise to bid the conflict cease ? "

To whom Apollo, royal son of Jove : 45
" The might of valiant Hector let us move
To challenge to the combat, man to man,
Some Grecian warrior ; while the brass-clad Greeks
Their champion urge the challenge to accept,
And godlike Hector meet in single fight." 50

He said ; nor did Minerva not assent ;
But Helenus, the son of Priam, knew
The secret counsel by the Gods devis'd ;
And drawing near to Hector, thus he spoke :
" Hector, thou son of Priam, sage as Jove 55
In council, hearken to a brother's words.
Bid that the Greeks and Trojans all sit down,
And thou defy the boldest of the Greeks
With thee in single combat to contend ;
By revelation from th' eternal Gods, 60

I know that here thou shalt not meet thy fate."

He said, and Hector joy'd to hear his words;
Forth in the midst he stepp'd, and with his spear
Grasp'd in the middle, stay'd the Trojan ranks.

With one accord they sat; on th' other side 65

Atrides bade the well-greav'd Greeks sit down;

While, in the likeness of two vultures, sat

On the tall oak of ægis-bearing Jove,

Pallas, and Phœbus of the silver bow,

With heroes' deeds delighted; dense around 70

Bristled the ranks, with shield, and helm, and spear.

As when the west wind freshly blows, and brings

A dark'ning ripple o'er the ocean waves,

Ev'n so appear'd upon the plain the ranks

Of Greeks and Trojans; standing in the midst, 75

Thus to both armies noble Hector spoke:

"Hear, all ye Trojans, and ye well-greav'd Greeks,

The words I speak, the promptings of my soul.

It hath not pleas'd high-thron'd Saturnian Jove,

To ratify our truce, who both afflicts 80

With labours hard, till either ye shall take

Our well-fenc'd city, or yourselves to us

Succumb beside your ocean-going ships.
Here have ye all the chiefest men of Greece;
Of all, let him who dares with me to fight, 85
Stand forth, and godlike Hector's might confront.
And this I say, and call to witness Jove,
If with the sharp-edg'd spear he vanquish me,
He shall strip off, and to the hollow ships
In triumph bear my armour; but my corpse 90
Restore, that so the men and wives of Troy
May deck with honours due my funeral pyre.
But, by Apollo's grace should I prevail,
I will his arms strip off and bear to Troy,
And in Apollo's temple hang on high; 95
But to the ships his corpse I will restore,
That so the long-hair'd Greeks with solemn rites
May bury him, and to his mem'ry raise
By the broad Hellespont a lofty tomb;
And men in days to come shall say, who urge 100
Their full-oar'd bark across the dark-blue sea,
'Lo there a warrior's tomb of days gone by,
A mighty chief, whom glorious Hector slew:'
Thus shall they say, and thus my fame shall live."

Thus Hector spoke; they all in silence heard, 105
Sham'd to refuse, but fearful to accept.
At length in anger Meneläus rose,
Groaning in spirit, and with bitter words
Reproach'd them: "Shame, ye braggart cowards, shame!
Women of Greece! I cannot call you men! 110
'Twere foul disgrace indeed, and scorn on scorn,
If Hector's challenge none of all the Greeks
Should dare accept; to dust and water turn
All ye who here inglorious, heartless sit!
I will myself confront him; for success, 115
Th' immortal Gods above the issues hold."

Thus as he spoke, he donn'd his dazzling arms.
Then, Meneläus, had thine end approach'd
By Hector's hands, so much the stronger he,
Had not the Kings withheld thee and restrain'd. 120
Great Agamemnon's self, wide-ruling King,
Seizing his hand, address'd him thus by name:
"What! Heav'n-born Meneläus, art thou mad?
Beseems thee not such folly; curb thy wrath,
Though vex'd; nor think with Hector to contend, 125
Thy better far, inspiring dread in all.

From his encounter in the glorious fight,
Superior far to thee, Achilles shrinks;
But thou amid thy comrades' ranks retire;
Some other champion will the Greeks provide; 130
And, fearless as he is, and of the fight
Insatiate, yet will Hector, should he 'scape
Unwounded from the deadly battle-strife,
Be fain, methinks, to rest his weary limbs."

He said, and with judicious counsel sway'd 135
His brother's mind; he yielded to his words,
And gladly his attendants doff'd his arms.

Then Nestor rose, and thus address'd the Greeks:
"Alas, alas! what shame is this for Greece!
What grief would fill the aged Peleus' soul, 140
Sage chief in council, of the Myrmidons
Leader approv'd, who often in his house
Would question me, and lov'd from me to hear
Of all the Greeks the race and pedigree,
Could he but learn how Hector cow'd them all! 145
He to the Gods with hands uprais'd would pray
His soul might from his body be divorc'd,
And sink beneath the earth! Oh would to Jove,

To Pallas and Apollo, such were now
My vig'rous youth, as when beside the banks 150
Of swiftly-flowing Celadon, the men
Of Pylos with th' Arcadian spearmen fought,
By Pheia's walls, around Iardan's streams.
Then from the ranks, in likeness as a God,
Advanc'd their champion, Ereuthalion bold. 155
The arms of Arëithōus he wore:
Of godlike Arëithōus, whom men
And richly-girdled women had surnam'd
The Macebearer; for not with sword or bow
He went to fight, but with an iron mace 160
Broke through the squadrons: him Lycurgus slew,
By stealth, not brav'ry, in a narrow way,
Where nought avail'd his iron mace from death
To save him; for Lycurgus, with his spear,
Preventing, thrust him through the midst; he fell 165
Prostrate; and from his breast the victor stripp'd
His armour off, the gift of brass-clad Mars;
And in the tug of war he wore it oft;
But when Lycurgus felt th' approach of age,
He to his faithful follower and friend, 170

To Ereuthalion gave it; therewith arm'd,
He now to combat challeng'd all the chiefs.
None dar'd accept, for fear had fall'n on all;
Then I with dauntless spirit his might oppos'd,
The youngest of them all; with him I fought, 175
And Pallas gave the vict'ry to my arm.
Him there I slew, the tallest, strongest man;
For many another there beside him lay.
Would that my youth and strength were now the same;
Then soon should Hector of the glancing helm 180
A willing champion find; but ye, of Greece
The foremost men, with Hector fear to fight.”
The old man spoke reproachful; at his words
Up rose nine warriors: far before the rest,
The monarch Agamemnon, King of men; 185
Next 'Tydeus' son, the valiant Diomed;
The two Ajaces, cloth'd with courage high;
Idomeneus, and of Idomeneus
The faithful follower, brave Meriones,
Equal in fight to blood-stain'd Mars; with these 190
Eurypylus, Euæmon's noble son;
Thoas, Andraemon's son; Ulysses last:

These all with Hector offer'd to contend.

Then thus again Gerenian Nestor spoke :

“ Shake then the lots ; on whomsoe'er it fall, 195

Great profit shall he bring to Grecian arms,

Great glory to himself, if he escape

Unwounded from the deadly battle strife.”

He said : each mark'd his sev'ral lot, and all

Together threw in Agamemnon's helm. 200

The crowd, with hands uplifted, pray'd the Gods,

And looking heav'nward, said, “ Grant, Father Jove,

The lot on Ajax, or on Tydeus' son,

Or on Mycenæ's wealthy King may fall.”

Thus they : then aged Nestor shook the helm, 205

And forth, according to their wish, was thrown

The lot of Ajax ; then from left to right

A herald show'd to all the chiefs of Greece,

In turn, the token ; they who knew it not,

Disclaim'd it all ; but when to him they came 210

Who mark'd, and threw it in Atrides' helm,

The noble Ajax, he his hand put forth,

And standing near he seiz'd it ; straight he knew

The token, and rejoic'd ; before his feet

He threw it down upon the ground, and said, 215

“ O friends, the lot is mine; great is my joy,

And hope o'er godlike Hector to prevail.

But now, while I my warlike armour don,

Pray ye to Saturn's royal son, apart,

In silence, that the Trojans hear ye not; 220

Or ev'n aloud, for nought have we to fear.

No man against my will can make me fly,

By greater force or skill; nor will, I hope,

My inexperience in the field disgrace

The teaching of my native Salamis.” 225

Thus he; and they to Saturn's royal son

Address'd their pray'rs, and looking heav'nward, said:

“ O Father Jove, who rul'st on Ida's height!

Most great! most glorious! grant that Ajax now

May gain the vict'ry, and immortal praise; 230

Or if thy love and pity Hector claim,

Give equal pow'r and equal praise to both.”

Ajax meanwhile in dazzling brass was clad;

And when his armour all was duly donn'd,

Forward he mov'd, as when gigantic Mars 235

Leads nations forth to war, whom Saturn's son

In life-destroying conflict hath involv'd;
So mov'd the giant Ajax, prop of Greece,
With sternly smiling mien; with haughty stride
He trod the plain, and pois'd his pond'rous spear. 240
The Greeks, rejoicing, on their champion gaz'd,
The Trojans' limbs beneath them shook with fear;
Ev'n Hector's heart beat quicker in his breast;
Yet quail he must not now, nor back retreat
Amid his comrades—he, the challenger! 245
Ajax approach'd; before him, as a tow'r
His mighty shield he bore, sev'n-fold, brass-bound,
The work of Tychius, best artificer
That wrought in leather; he in Hyla dwelt.
Of sev'n-fold hides the pond'rous shield was wrought 250
Of lusty bulls; the eighth was glitt'ring brass.
This by the son of Telamon was borne
Before his breast; to Hector close he came,
And thus with words of haughty menace spoke:
“Hector, I now shall teach thee, man to man, 255
The mettle of the chiefs we yet possess,
Although Achilles of the lion heart,
Mighty in battle, be not with us still;

He by his ocean-going ships indeed
Against Atrides nurses still his wrath; 260
Yet are there those who dare encounter thee,
And not a few; then now begin the fight."

To whom great Hector of the glancing helm:
"Ajax, brave leader, son of Telamon,
Deal not with me as with a feeble child, 265
Or woman, ign'rant of the ways of war;
Of war and carnage every point I know;
And well I know to wield, now right, now left,
The tough bull's-hide that forms my stubborn targe:
Well know I too my fiery steeds to urge, 270
And raise the war-cry in the standing fight.
But not in secret ambush would I watch,
To strike, by stealth, a noble foe like thee;
But slay thee, if I may, in open fight."

He said; and, poising, hurl'd his pond'rous spear; 275
The brazen cov'ring of the shield it struck,
The outward fold, the eighth, above the sev'n
Of tough bull's-hide; through six it drove its way
With stubborn force; but in the sev'nth was stay'd.
Then Ajax hurl'd in turn his pond'rous spear, 280

And struck the circle true of Hector's shield:
Right through the glitt'ring shield the stout spear pass'd,
And through the well-wrought breastplate drove its way;
And, underneath, the linen vest it tore;
But Hector, stooping, shunn'd the stroke of death. 285
Withdrawing then their weapons, each on each
They fell, like lions fierce, or tuskèd boars,
In strength the mightiest of the forest beasts.
Then Hector fairly on the centre struck
The stubborn shield; yet drove not through the spear; 290
For the stout brass the blunted point repell'd.
But Ajax, with a forward bound, the shield
Of Hector pierc'd; right through the weapon pass'd;
Arrested with rude shock the warrior's course,
And graz'd his neck, that spouted forth the blood. 295
Yet did not Hector of the glancing helm
Flinch from the contest: stooping to the ground,
With his broad hand a pond'rous stone he seiz'd,
That lay upon the plain, dark, jagg'd, and huge,
And hurl'd against the sev'n-fold shield, and struck 300
Full on the central boss; loud rang the brass:
Then Ajax rais'd a weightier mass of rock

And sent it whirling, giving to his arm
Unmeasur'd impulse; with a millstone's weight
It crush'd the buckler; Hector's knees gave way; 305
Backward he stagger'd, yet upon his shield
Sustain'd, till Phœbus rais'd him to his feet.
Now had they hand to hand with swords engag'd,
Had not the messengers of Gods and men,
The heralds, interpos'd; the one for Troy, 310
The other umpire for the brass-clad Greeks,
Talthybius and Idæus, well approv'd.
Between the chiefs they held their wands, and thus
Idæus both with prudent speech address'd:
"No more, brave youths! no longer wage the fight: 315
To cloud-compelling Jove ye both are dear,
Both valiant spearmen; that, we all have seen.
Night is at hand; behoves us yield to night."

Whom answer'd thus the son of Telamon:
"Idæus, bid that Hector speak those words: 320
He challeng'd all our chiefs; let him begin:
If he be willing, I shall not refuse."

To whom great Hector of the glancing helm:
"Ajax, since God hath giv'n thee size, and strength,

And skill; and with the spear, of all the Greeks 325

None is thine equal; cease we for to-day

The fight; hereafter we may meet, and Heav'n

Decide our cause, and one with vict'ry crown.

Night is at hand; behoves us yield to night.

So by the ships shalt thou rejoice the Greeks, 330

And most of all, thy comrades and thy friends;

And so shall I, in Priam's royal town,

Rejoice the men of Troy, and long-rob'd dames,

Who shall with grateful pray'rs the temples throng.

But make we now an interchange of gifts, 335

That both the Trojans and the Greeks may say,

'On mortal quarrel did those warriors meet,

Yet parted thence in friendly bonds conjoin'd.'

This said, a silver-studded sword he gave,

With scabbard and with well-cut belt complete; 340

Ajax a girdle, rich with crimson dye.

They parted; Ajax to the Grecian camp,

And Hector to the ranks of Troy return'd:

Great was the joy when him they saw approach,

Alive and safe; escap'd from Ajax' might 345

And arm invincible; and tow'rd the town

They led him back, beyond their hope preserv'd;
While to Atrides' tent the well-greav'd Greeks
Led Ajax, glorying in his triumph gain'd.

But when to Agamemnon's tents they came, 350
The King of men to Saturn's royal son
A bullock slew, a male of five years old;
The carcase then they flay'd; and cutting up,
Sever'd the joints; then fixing on the spits,
Roasted with care, and from the fire withdrew. 355

Their labours ended, and the feast prepar'd,
They shar'd the social meal, nor lack'd there aught.

To Ajax then the chine's continuous length,
As honour's meed, the mighty monarch gave.

The rage of thirst and hunger satisfied, 360

The aged Nestor first his mind disclos'd;

He who, before, the sagest counsel gave,

Now thus with prudent speech began, and said:

"Atrides, and ye other chiefs of Greece,

Since many a long-hair'd Greek hath fall'n in fight, 365

Whose blood, beside Scamander's flowing stream,

Fierce Mars has shed, while to the viewless shades

Their spirits are gone, behoves thee with the morn

The warfare of the Greeks to intermit :

Then we, with oxen and with mules, the dead 370

From all the plain will draw; and, from the ships

A little space remov'd, will burn with fire :

That we, returning to our native land,

May to their children bear our comrades' bones.

Then will we go, and on the plain erect 375

Around the pyre one common mound for all;

Then quickly build before it lofty tow'rs

To screen both ships and men; and in the tow'rs

Make ample portals, with well-fitting gates,

That through the midst a carriage-way may pass : 380

And a deep trench around it dig, to guard

Both men and chariots, lest on our defence

The haughty Trojans should too hardly press."

He said; and all the Kings his words approv'd.

Meanwhile, on Ilium's height, at Priam's gate, 385

The Trojan chiefs a troubled council held;

Which op'ning, thus the sage Antenor spoke :

"Hear now, ye Trojans, Dardans, and Allies,

The words I speak, the promptings of my soul.

Back to the sons of Atreus let us give 390

The Argive Helen, and the goods she brought;
For now in breach of plighted faith we fight;
Nor can I hope, unless to my advice
Ye listen, that success will crown our arms."

Thus having said, he sat; and next arose 395

The godlike Paris, fair-hair'd Helen's Lord;
Who thus with wingèd words the chiefs address'd:

"Hostile to me, Antenor, is thy speech;
Thy better judgment better counsel knows;

But if in earnest such is thine advice, 400

Thee of thy senses have the Gods bereft.

Now, Trojans, hear my answer; I reject

The counsel, nor the woman will restore;

But for the goods, whate'er I hither brought

To Troy from Argos, I am well content 405

To give them all, and others add beside."

This said, he sat; and aged Priam next,
A God in council, Dardan's son, arose,
Who thus with prudent speech began, and said:

"Hear now, ye Trojans, Dardans, and Allies, 410
The words I speak, the promptings of my soul:
Now through the city take your wonted meal;

Look to your watch, let each man keep his guard:

To-morrow shall Idæus to the ships

Of Greece, to both the sons of Atreus, bear 415

The words of Paris, cause of all this war;

And ask besides, if from the deadly strife

Such truce they will accord us as may serve

To burn the dead: hereafter we may fight

Till Heav'n decide, and one with vict'ry crown." 420

He said; and they, obedient to his word,

Throughout the ranks prepar'd the wonted meal:

But with the morning to the ships of Greece

Idæus took his way: in council there

By Agamemnon's leading ship he found 425

The Grecian chiefs, the ministers of Mars:

And 'mid them all the clear-voic'd herald spoke:

"Ye sons of Atreus, and ye chiefs of Greece,

From Priam, and the gallant sons of Troy,

I come, to bear, if ye be pleas'd to hear, 430

The words of Paris, cause of all this war:

The goods which hither in his hollow ships

(Would he had perish'd rather!) Paris brought,

He will restore, and others add beside;

But further says, the virgin-wedded wife 435
Of Meneläus, though the gen'ral voice
Of Troy should bid him, he will not restore :
Then bids me ask, if from the deadly strife
Such truce ye will accord us as may serve
To burn the dead : hereafter we may fight 440
Till Heav'n decide, and one with vict'ry crown."

Thus he : they all in silence heard ; at length
Uprose the valiant Diomed, and said ;
"Let none from Paris now propose to accept
Or goods, or Helen's self ; a child may see 445
That now the doom of Troy is close at hand."
He said ; the sons of Greece, with loud applause,
The speech of valiant Diomed confirm'd.

Then to Idæus Agamemnon thus :
"Idæus, thou hast heard what answer give 450
The chiefs of Greece—their answer I approve.
But for the truce, for burial of the dead,
I nought demur ; no shame it is to grace
With fun'ral rites the corpse of slaughter'd foes.
Be witness, Jove ! and guard the plighted truce." 455

He said ; and heav'nward rais'd his staff ; and back

To Ilium's walls Idæus took his way.

Trojans and Dardans there in council met

Expecting sat, till from the Grecian camp

Idæus should return; he came, and stood 460

In mid assembly, and his message gave:

'Then all in haste their sev'ral ways dispers'd,

For fuel some, and some to bring the dead.

The Greeks too from their well-mann'd ships went forth,

For fuel some, and some to bring the dead. 465

'The sun was newly glancing on the earth,

From out the ocean's smoothly-flowing depths

Climbing the Heav'ns, when on the plain they met.

Hard was it then to recognize the dead;

But when the gory dust was wash'd away, 470

Shedding hot tears, they plac'd them on the wains.

Nor loud lament, by Priam's high command,

Was heard; in silence they, with grief suppress'd,

Heap'd up their dead upon the fun'ral pyre;

Then burnt with fire, and back return'd to Troy. 475

The well-greav'd Greeks, they too, with grief suppress'd,

Heap'd up their dead upon the fun'ral pyre;

Then burnt with fire, and to the ships return'd.

But ere 'twas morn, while daylight strove with night,
About the pyre a chosen band of Greeks 480
Had kept their vigil, and around it rais'd
Upon the plain one common mound for all;
And built in front a wall, with lofty tow'rs
To screen both ships and men; and in the tow'rs
Made ample portals with well-fitting gates, 485
That through the midst a carriage-way might pass:
Then dug a trench around it, deep and wide,
And in the trench a palisade they fix'd.

Thus labour'd through the night the long-hair'd Greeks:
The Gods, assembled in the courts of Jove, 490
With wonder view'd the mighty work; and thus
Neptune, Earth-shaking King, his speech began:
"O Father Jove, in all the wide-spread earth
Shall men be found, in counsel and design
To rival us Immortals? see'st thou not 495
How round their ships the long-hair'd Greeks have built
A lofty wall, and dug a trench around,
Nor to the Gods have paid their off'rings due?
Wide as the light extends shall be the fame
Of this great work, and men shall lightly deem 500

Of that which I and Phœbus jointly rais'd,
With toil and pain, for great Læomedon."

To whom in wrath the Cloud-compeller thus :
" Neptune, Earth-shaking King, what words are these ?
This bold design to others of the Gods, 505
Of feebler hands, and pow'r less great than thine,
Might cause alarm ; but, far as light extends,
Of this great work to thee shall be the fame :
When with their ships the long-hair'd Greeks shall take
Their homeward voyage to their native land, 510
This wall shall by the waves be broken through,
And sink, a shapeless ruin, in the sea :
O'er the wide shore again thy sands shall spread,
And all the boasted work of Greece o'erwhelm."

Amid themselves such converse held the Gods. 515
The sun was set ; the Grecian work was done ;
They slew, and shar'd, by tents, the ev'ning meal.
From Lemnos' isle a num'rous fleet had come
Freighted with wine ; and by Eumæus sent,
Whom fair Hypsipyle to Jason bore. 520
For Atreus' sons, apart from all the rest,
Of wine, the son of Jason had despatch'd

A thousand measures ; all the other Greeks
Hasten'd to purchase, some with brass, and some
With gleaming iron ; other some with hides, 525
Cattle, or slaves ; and joyous wax'd the feast.
All night the long-hair'd Greeks their revels held,
And so in Troy, the Trojans and Allies :
But through the night his anger Jove express'd
With awful thund'rings ; pale they turn'd with fear : 530
To earth the wine was from the goblets shed,
Nor dar'd they drink, until libations due
Had first been pour'd to Saturn's mighty son.
Then lay they down, and sought the boon of sleep. 534

BOOK VIII.

NOW morn, in saffron robe, the earth o'erspread;

And Jove, the lightning's Lord, of all the Gods
A council held upon the highest peak
Of many-ridg'd Olympus; he himself
Address'd them; they his speech attentive heard. 5

"Hear, all ye Gods, and all ye Goddesses,
The words I speak, the promptings of my soul.
Let none among you, male or female, dare
To interrupt my speech; but all attend,
That so these matters I may soon conclude. 10
If, from the rest apart, one God I find
Presuming or to Trojans or to Greeks
To give his aid, with ignominious stripes
Back to Olympus shall that God be driv'n;
Or to the gloom of Tartarus profound, 15
Far off, the lowest abyss beneath the earth,

With gates of iron, and with floor of brass,
Beneath the shades as far as earth from Heav'n,
There will I hurl him, and ye all shall know
In strength how greatly I surpass you all. 20

Make trial if ye will, that all may know.
A golden cord let down from Heav'n, and all,
Both Gods and Goddesses, your strength apply :
Yet would ye fail to drag from Heav'n to earth,
Strive as ye may, your mighty master, Jove ; 25

But if I choose to make my pow'r be known,
The earth itself, and ocean, I could raise,
And binding round Olympus' ridge the cord,
Leave them suspended so in middle air :
So far supreme my pow'r o'er Gods and men." 30

He said, and they, confounded by his words,
In silence sat ; so sternly did he speak.

At length the blue-ey'd Goddess, Pallas, said :
" O Father, Son of Saturn, King of Kings,
Well do we know thy pow'r invincible ; 35
Yet deeply grieve we for the warlike Greeks,
Condemn'd to hopeless ruin ; from the fight,
Since such is thy command, we stand aloof ;

But yet some saving counsel may we give,
Lest in thine anger thou destroy them quite." 40

To whom the Cloud-compeller, smiling, thus :
" Be of good cheer, my child ; unwillingly
I speak, yet will not thwart thee of thy wish."

He said, and straight the brazen-footed steeds,
Of swiftest flight, with manes of flowing gold, 45
He harness'd to his chariot ; all in gold
Himself array'd, the golden lash he grasp'd,
Of curious work ; and mounting on his car,
Urg'd the fleet coursers ; nothing loth, they flew
Midway betwixt the earth and starry heav'n. 50

To Ida's spring-abounding hill he came,
And to the crest of Gargarus, wild nurse
Of mountain beasts ; a sacred plot was there,
Whereon his incense-honour'd altar stood :
There stay'd his steeds the Sire of Gods and men, 55
Loos'd from the car, and veil'd with clouds around.

Then on the topmost ridge he sat, in pride
Of conscious strength ; and looking down, survey'd
The Trojan city, and the ships of Greece.

Meantime, the long-hair'd Greeks throughout their tents, 60

With food recruited, arm'd them for the fight;
On th' other side the Trojans donn'd their arms,
In numbers fewer, but with stern resolve,
By hard necessity constrain'd, to strive,
For wives and children, in the stubborn fight. 65
The gates all open'd wide, forth pour'd the crowd
Of horse and foot; and loud the clamour rose.
When in the midst they met, together rush'd
Bucklers and lances, and the furious might
Of mail-clad warriors; bossy shield on shield 70
Clatter'd in conflict; loud the clamour rose:
Then rose too mingled shouts and groans of men
Slaying and slain; the earth ran red with blood.
While yet 'twas morn, and wax'd the youthful day,
Thick flew the shafts, and fast the people fell 75
On either side; but when the sun had reach'd
The middle Heav'n, th' Eternal Father hung
His golden scales aloft, and plac'd in each
The fatal death-lot: for the sons of Troy
The one, the other for the brass-clad Greeks; 80
Then held them by the midst; down sank the lot
Of Greece, down to the ground, while high aloft

Mounted the Trojan scale, and rose to Heav'n.*
Then loud he bade the volleying thunder peal
From Ida's heights; and 'mid the Grecian ranks 85
He hurl'd his flashing lightning; at the sight
Amaz'd they stood, and pale with terror shook.
Then not Idomeneus, nor Atreus' son,
The mighty Agamemnon, kept their ground,
Nor either Ajax, ministers of Mars; 90
Gerenian Nestor, aged prop of Greece,
Alone remain'd, and he against his will,
His horse sore wounded by an arrow shot
By godlike Paris, fair-hair'd Helen's Lord:
Just on the crown, where close behind the head 95
First springs the mane, the deadliest spot of all,
The arrow struck him; madden'd with the pain
He rear'd, then plunging forward, with the shaft
Fix'd in his brain, and rolling in the dust,
The other steeds in dire confusion threw; 100

* See also Book xxii. l. 252.

Milton, in the corresponding passage at the close of the 4th Book of 'Paradise Lost,' reverses the sign, and represents the scale of the vanquished as "flying up" and "kicking the beam."

"The Fiend look'd up, and knew
His mounted scale aloft; nor more, but fled
Murm'ring, and with him fled the shades of night."

And while old Nestor with his sword essay'd
To cut the reins, and free the struggling horse,
Amid the rout down came the flying steeds
Of Hector, guided by no timid hand,
By Hector's self; then had the old man paid 105
The forfeit of his life, but, good at need,
The valiant Diomed his peril saw,
And loudly shouting, on Ulysses call'd:
" Ulysses sage, Laertes' godlike son,
Why fliest thou, coward-like, behind thy back 110
Thy shafts at random pouring on the crowd?
Thus as thou fliest, perchance some foeman's lance
May pierce thy back; but stay, and here with me
From this fierce warrior guard the good old man."
He said; but stout Ulysses heard him not, 115
And to the ships pursued his hurried way.
But in the front, Tydides, though alone,
Remain'd undaunted; by old Nestor's car
He stood, and thus the aged chief address'd:
" Old man, these youthful warriors press thee sore, 120
Thy vigour spent, and with the weight of years
Oppress'd; and helpless too thy charioteer,

And slow thy horses; mount my car, and prove
With me the mettle of the Trojan steeds;
How swift they wheel, or in pursuit or flight; 125
The prize which I from great Æneas won.
Leave to th' attendants these; while mine we launch
Against the Trojan host, that Hector's self
May know how strong my hand can hurl the spear."

He said; and Nestor his advice obey'd: 130
The two attendants, valiant Sthenelus,
And good Eurymedon, his horses took,
While on Tydides' car they mounted both.
The aged Nestor took the glitt'ring reins,
And urg'd the horses; Hector soon they met: 135
As on he came, his spear Tydides threw,
Yet struck not Hector; but his charioteer,
Who held the reins, the brave Thebæus' son,
Eniopæus, through the breast transfix'd,
Beside the nipple; from the car he fell, 140
The startled horses swerving at the sound;
And from his limbs the vital spirit fled.
Deep, for his comrade slain, was Hector's grief;
Yet him, though griev'd, perforce he left to seek

A chariotceer; nor wanted long his steeds 145

A guiding hand; for Archeptolemus,

Brave son of Iphitus, he quickly found,

And bade him mount his swiftly-flying car,

And to his hands the glitt'ring reins transferr'd.

Then fearful ruin had been wrought, and deeds 150

Untold achiev'd, and like a flock of lambs,

The adverse hosts been coop'd beneath the walls,

Had not the Sire of Gods and men beheld,

And with an awful peal of thunder hurl'd

His vivid lightning down; the fiery bolt 155

Before Tydides' chariot plough'd the ground.

Fierce flash'd the sulph'rous flame, and whirling round

Beneath the yoke th' affrighted horses quail'd.

From Nestor's hand escap'd the glitt'ring reins,

And, trembling, thus to Diomed he spoke: 160

“Turn we to flight, Tydides; see'st thou not,

That Jove from us his aiding hand withholds?

This day to Hector Saturn's son decrees

The meed of vict'ry; on some future day,

If so he will, the triumph may be ours; 165

For man, how brave so'er, cannot o'errule

The will of Jove, so much the mightier he."

Whom answer'd thus the valiant Diomed:

"Truly, old man, and wisely dost thou speak;

But this the bitter grief that wrings my soul: 170

Some day, amid the counsellors of Troy

Hector may say, 'Before my presence scar'd

Tydidēs sought the shelter of the ships.'

Thus when he boasts, gape earth, and hide my shame!"

To whom Gerenian Nestor thus replied: 175

"Great son of Tydeus, oh what words are these!

Should Hector brand thee with a coward's name,

No credence would he gain from Trojan men,

Or Dardan, or from Trojan warriors' wives,

Whose husbands in the dust thy hand hath laid." 180

He said, and 'mid the gen'ral rout, to flight

He turn'd his horses; on the flying crowd,

With shouts of triumph, Hector at their head,

The men of Troy their murd'rous weapons show'r'd.

Loud shouted Hector of the glancing helm: 185

"Tydides, heretofore the warrior Greeks

Have held thee in much honour; plac'd on high

At banquets, and with lib'ral portions grac'd,

And flowing cups: but thou, from this day forth,
Shalt be their scorn! a woman's soul is thine! 190
Out on thee, frighten'd girl! thou ne'er shalt scale
Our Trojan tow'rs, and see me basely fly;
Nor in thy ships our women bear away:
Ere such thy boast, my hand shall work thy doom."

Thus he; and greatly was Tydides mov'd 195
To turn his horses, and confront his foe:
Thrice thus he doubted; thrice, at Jove's command,
From Ida's height the thunder peal'd, in sign
Of vict'ry swaying to the Trojan side.
Then to the Trojans Hector call'd aloud: 200
"Trojans, and Lycians, and ye Dardans, fam'd
In close encounter, quit ye now like men;
Put forth your wonted valour; for I know
That in his secret counsels Jove designs
Glory to me, disaster to the Greeks. 205
Fools, in those wretched walls that put their trust,
Scarce worthy notice, hopeless to withstand
My onset; and the trench that they have dug,
Our horses easily can overleap;
And when I reach the ships, be mindful ye, 210

To have at hand the fire, wherewith the ships
We may destroy, while they themselves shall fall
An easy prey, bewilder'd by the smoke."

He said, and thus with cheering words address'd
His horses: "Xanthus, and, Podargus, thou, 215
Æthon and Lampus, now repay the care
On you bestow'd by fair Andromache,
Eëtion's royal daughter; bear in mind
How she with ample store of provender
Your mangers still supplied, before ev'n I, 220
Her husband, from her hands the wine-cup took.
Put forth your speed, that we may make our prize
Of Nestor's shield, whose praise extends to Heav'n,
Its handles, and itself, of solid gold;
And from the shoulders of Tydides strip 225
His gorgeous breastplate, work of Vulcan's hand:
These could we take, methinks this very night
Would see the Greeks embarking on their ships."

Such was his pray'r; but Juno on her throne
Trembled with rage, till great Olympus quak'd, 230
And thus to Neptune, mighty God, she spoke:
"O thou of boundless might, Earth-shaking God,

See'st thou unmov'd the ruin of the Greeks?
Yet they in Ægæ and in Helice,
With grateful off'rings rich thine altars crown; 235
Then give we them the vict'ry; if we all
Who favour Greece, together should combine
To put to flight the Trojans, and restrain
All-seeing Jove, he might be left alone,
On Ida's summit to digest his wrath." 240

To whom, in anger, Neptune thus replied:
" O Juno, rash of speech, what words are these!
I dare not counsel that we all should join
'Gainst Saturn's son; so much the stronger he."

Thus they, conversing; all the space meanwhile 245
Enclos'd between the trench, and tow'r, and ships,
Was closely throng'd with steeds and buckler'd men;
By noble Hector, brave as Mars, and led
By Jove to vict'ry, coop'd in narrow space;
Who now had burnt with fire the Grecian ships, 250
But Juno bade Atrides haste to rouse
Their fainting courage; through the camp he pass'd;
On his broad hand a purple robe he bore,
And stood upon Ulysses' lofty ship,

The midmost, whence to shout to either side, 255
Or to the tents of Ajax Telamon,
Or of Achilles, who at each extreme,
Confiding in their strength, had moor'd their ships.

Thence to the Greeks he shouted, loud and clear :
“ Shame on ye, Greeks, base cowards, brave alone 260
In outward semblance ! where are now the vaunts
Which once (so highly of ourselves we deem'd)
Ye made, vain-glorious braggarts as ye were,
In Lemnos' isle, when, feasting on the flesh
Of straight-horn'd oxen, and your flowing cups 265
Crowning with ruddy wine, not one of you,
But for a hundred Trojans in the field,
Or for two hundred, deem'd himself a match :
Now quail ye all before a single man,
Hector, who soon will wrap our ships in fire. 270
O Father Jove ! what sov'reign e'er hast thou
So deep afflicted, of such glory robb'd ?
Yet ne'er, on this disastrous voyage bent,
Have I unheeded pass'd thine altar by ;
The choicest off'rings burning still on each, 275
In hopes to raze the well-built walls of Troy.

Yet to this pray'r at least thine ear incline;
Grant that this coast in safety we may leave,
Nor be by Trojans utterly subdued."

He said; and Jove, with pity, saw his tears; 280

And, with a sign, his people's safety vouch'd.

He sent an eagle, bird of swiftest flight,

That in his talons bore a wild deer's fawn:

The fawn he dropp'd beside the holy shrine,

Where to the Lord of divination, Jove, 285

The Greeks were wont their solemn rites to pay.

The sign from Heav'n they knew; with courage fresh

Assail'd the Trojans, and the fight renew'd.

Then none of all the many Greeks might boast

That he, before Tydides, drove his car 290

Across the ditch, and mingled in the fight.

His was the hand that first a crested chief,

The son of Phradmon, Ageläus, struck.

He turn'd his car for flight; but as he turn'd,

The lance of Diomed, behind his neck, 295

Between the shoulders, through his chest was driv'n;

Headlong he fell, and loud his armour rang.

Next to Tydides, Agamemnon came,

And Meneläus, Atreus' godlike sons ;
Th' Ajaces both, in dauntless courage cloth'd ; 300
Idomeneus, with whom Meriones,
His faithful comrade, terrible as Mars ;
Eurypylus, Euæmon's noble son ;
The ninth was Teucer, who, with bended bow,
Behind the shield of Ajax Telamon 305
Took shelter ; Ajax o'er him held his shield ;
Thence look'd he round, and aim'd amid the crowd ;
And as he saw each Trojan, wounded, fall,
Struck by his shafts, to Ajax close he press'd,
As to its mother's shelt'ring arms a child, 310
Conceal'd and safe beneath the ample targe.
Say then, who first of all the Trojans fell
By Teucer's arrows slain ? Orsilochus,
And Ophelestes, Dætor, Ormenus,
And godlike Lycophontes, Chromius, 315
And Amopaon, Polyæmon's son,
And valiant Melanippus : all of these,
Each after other, Teucer laid in dust.
Him Agamemnon, with his well-strung bow
Thinning the Trojan ranks, with joy beheld, 320

And, standing at his side, address'd him thus :

“ Teucer, good comrade, son of Telamon,

Shoot ever thus, if thou wouldst be the light

And glory of the Greeks, and of thy sire,

Who nurs'd thine infancy, and in his house 325

Maintain'd, though bastard born ; thy fame on him,

Though distant far, fresh glory shall reflect.

This too I say, and will make good my word :

If by the grace of ægis-bearing Jove,

And Pallas, Ilium's well-built walls we raze, 330

A gift of honour, second but to mine,

I in thy hands will place ; a tripod bright,

Or, with their car and harness, two brave steeds,

Or a fair woman who thy bed may share.”

To whom in answer valiant Teucer thus : 335

“ Most mighty son of Atreus, why excite

Who lacks not zeal ? To th' utmost of my pow'r

Have I unceasing, since we came to Troy,

Watch'd for each chance to wing a deadly shaft.

Eight barbèd arrows have I shot e'en now, 340

And in a warrior each has found its mark ;

That savage hound alone defeats my aim.”

At Hector, as he spoke, another shaft
He shot, ambitious of so great a prize :
He miss'd his aim ; but Priam's noble son 345
Gorgythion, through the breast his arrow struck,
Whom in chaste wedlock Castianeira, fair
As heav'nly Goddess, in Æsyme bore.
Down sank his head, as in a garden sinks
A ripen'd poppy charg'd with vernal rains ; 350
So sank his head beneath his helmet's weight.
At Hector yet another arrow shot
Teucer, ambitious of so great a prize ;
Yet this too miss'd, by Phœbus turn'd aside ;
But Archeptolemus, the charioteer 355
Of Hector, onward hurrying, through the breast
It struck, beside the nipple ; from the car
He fell ; aside the startled horses swerv'd ;
And as he fell the vital spirit fled.
Deep, for his comrade slain, was Hector's grief ; 360
Yet him, though griev'd at heart, perforce he left,
And to Cebriones, his brother, call'd,
Then near at hand, the horses' reins to take ;
He heard, and straight obey'd ; then Hector leap'd

Down from his glitt'ring chariot to the ground, 365
His fearful war-cry shouting; in his hand
A pond'rous stone he carried; and, intent
To strike him down, at Teucer straight he rush'd.
He from his quiver chose a shaft in haste,
And fitted to the cord; but as he drew 370
The sinew, Hector of the glancing helm
Hurl'd the huge mass of rock, which Teucer struck
Near to the shoulder, where the collar-bone
Joins neck and breast, the spot most opportune,
And broke the tendon; paralys'd, his arm 375
Dropp'd helpless by his side; upon his knees
He fell, and from his hand let fall the bow.
Not careless Ajax saw his brother's fall,
But o'er him spread in haste his cov'ring shield.
Two faithful friends, Mecisteus, Echiuss' son, 380
And brave Alastor, from the press withdrew,
And bore him, deeply groaning, to the ships.
Then Jove again the Trojan courage fir'd,
And backward to the ditch they forc'd the Greeks.
Proud of his prowess, Hector led them on; 385
And as a hound that, fleet of foot, o'ertakes

Or boar or lion, object of his chase,
Springs from behind, and fastens on his flank,
Yet careful watches, lest he turn to bay:
So Hector press'd upon the long-hair'd Greeks, 390
Slaying the hindmost; they in terror fled.
But, pass'd at length the ditch and palisade,
With loss of many by the Trojans slain,
Before the ships they rallied from their flight,
And one to other call'd; and one and all 395
With hands uplifted, pray'd to all the Gods;
While Hector, here and there, on ev'ry side
His flying coursers wheel'd, with eyes that flash'd
Awful as Gorgon's, or as blood-stain'd Mars.

Juno, the white-arm'd Queen, with pity mov'd, 400
To Pallas thus her wingèd words address'd:
"O Heav'n, brave child of ægis-bearing Jove,
Can we, ev'n now, in this their sorest need,
Refuse the Greeks our aid, by one subdued,
One single man, of pride unbearable, 405
Hector, the son of Priam, who e'en now
Hath caus'd them endless grief?" To whom again
The blue-ey'd Goddess, Pallas, thus replied:

“ I too would fain behold him robb’d of life,
In his own country slain by Grecian hands; 410
But that my sire, by ill advice misled,
Rages in wrath, still thwarting all my plans;
Forgetting now how oft his son I sav’d,
Sore wearied with the toils Eurystheus gave.
Oft would his tears ascend to Heav’n, and oft 415
From Heav’n would Jove despatch me to his aid;
But if I then had known what now I know,
When to the narrow gates of Pluto’s realm
He sent him forth to bring from Erebus
Its guardian dog, he never had return’d 420
In safety from the marge of Styx profound.
He holds me now in hatred, and his ear
To Thetis lends, who kiss’d his knees, and touch’d
His beard, and pray’d him to avenge her son
Achilles; yet the time shall come when I 425
Shall be once more his own dear blue-ey’d Maid.
But haste thee now, prepare for us thy car,
While to the house of ægis-bearing Jove
I go, and don my armour for the fight,
To prove if Hector of the glancing helm, 430

The son of Priam, will unmov'd behold
Us two advancing o'er the pass of war;
Or if the flesh of Trojans, slain by Greeks,
Shall sate the maw of rav'ning dogs and birds."

She said: the white-arm'd Queen her word obey'd. 435
Juno, great Goddess, royal Saturn's child,
The horses brought, with golden frontlets crown'd;
While Pallas, child of ægis-bearing Jove,
Within her father's threshold dropp'd her veil
Of airy texture, work of her own hands; 440
The cuirass donn'd of cloud-compelling Jove,
And stood accoutred for the bloody fray.
The fiery car she mounted; in her hand
A spear she bore, long, weighty, tough; wherewith
The mighty daughter of a mighty sire 445
Sweeps down the ranks of those her wrath pursues.
Then Juno sharply touch'd the flying steeds;
Forthwith the gates of Heav'n their portals wide
Spontaneous open'd, guarded by the Hours,
Who Heav'n and high Olympus have in charge, 450
To roll aside or close the veil of cloud;
Through these th' excited horses held their way.

From Ida's heights the son of Saturn saw,
And, fill'd with wrath, the heav'nly messenger,
The golden-wingèd Iris, thus bespoke : 455
" Haste thee, swift Iris ; turn them back, and warn
That farther they advance not : 'tis not meet
That they and I in war should be oppos'd.
This too I say, and will make good my words :
Their flying horses I will lame ; themselves 460
Dash from their car, and break their chariot-wheels ;
And ten revolving years heal not the wound
Where strikes my lightning : so shall Pallas learn
What 'tis against her father to contend.
Juno less moves my wonder and my wrath, 465
For she is ever wont my schemes to thwart."
Thus he : from Ida to Olympus' height
The storm-swift Iris on her errand sped.
At many-ridg'd Olympus' outer gate
She met the Goddesses, and stay'd their course, 470
And thus convey'd the sov'reign will of Jove :
" Whither away ? what madness fills your breasts ?
To give the Greeks your succour, Jove forbids ;
And thus he threatens, and will make it good :

Your flying horses he will lame; yourselves 475

Dash from the car, and break your chariot-wheels;

And ten revolving years heal not the wounds

His lightning makes: so, Pallas, shalt thou learn

What 'tis against thy father to contend.

Juno less moves his wonder and his wrath, 480

For she is ever wont his schemes to thwart;

But over-bold and void of shame art thou,

If against Jove thou dare to lift thy spear."

Thus as she spoke, swift Iris disappear'd.

Then Juno thus to Pallas spoke: "No more, 485

Daughter of ægis-bearing Jove, can we

For mortal men his sov'reign will resist;

Live they or die, as each man's fate may be;

While he, 'twixt Greeks and Trojans, as 'tis meet,

His own designs accomplishing, decides." 490

She said, and backward turn'd her horses' heads.

The horses from the car the Hours unyok'd,

And safely tether'd in the heav'nly stalls;

The car they rear'd against the inner wall,

That brightly polish'd shone; the Goddesses 495

Themselves meanwhile, amid th' Immortals all,

With sorrowing hearts on golden seats reclin'd.

Ere long, on swiftly-rolling chariot borne,
Jove to Olympus, to th' abode of Gods,
From Ida's height return'd: th' Earth-shaking God, 500
Neptune, unyok'd his steeds; and on the stand
Secur'd the car, and spread the cov'ring o'er.
Then on his golden throne all-seeing Jove
Sat down; beneath his feet Olympus shook.
Juno and Pallas only sat aloof; 505
No word they utter'd, no enquiry made.
Jove knew their thoughts, and thus address'd them both:
"Pallas and Juno, wherefore sit ye thus
In angry silence? In the glorious fight
No lengthen'd toil have ye sustain'd, to slay 510
The Trojans, objects of your bitt'rest hate.
Not all the Gods that on Olympus dwell
Could turn me from my purpose, such my might,
And such the pow'r of my resistless hand;
But ye were struck with terror ere ye saw 515
The battle-field, and fearful deeds of war.
But this I say, and bear it in your minds,
Had I my lightning launch'd, and from your car

Had hurl'd ye down, ye ne'er had reach'd again
Olympus' height, th' immortal Gods' abode." 520

So spoke the God; but, seated side by side,
Juno and Pallas glances interchang'd
Of ill portent for Troy; Pallas indeed
Sat silent, and, though inly wroth with Jove,
Yet answer'd not a word; but Juno's breast 525

Could not contain her rage, and thus she spoke:
"What words, dread son of Saturn, dost thou speak?

Well do we know thy pow'r invincible,
Yet deeply grieve we for the warlike Greeks,
Condemn'd to hopeless ruin: from the fight, 530
Since such is thy command, we stand aloof;
But yet some saving counsel may we give,
Lest in thine anger thou destroy them quite."

To whom the Cloud-compeller thus replied:
"Yet greater slaughter, stag-ey'd Queen of Heav'n, 535

To-morrow shalt thou see, if so thou list,
Wrought on the warrior Greeks by Saturn's son;
For Hector's proud career shall not be check'd
Until the wrath of Peleus' godlike son
Beside the ships be kindled, in the day 540

When round Patroclus' corpse, in narrow space,
Ev'n by the vessels' sterns, the war shall rage.
Such is the voice of destiny: for thee,
I reckon not of thy wrath; nor should I care
Though thou wert thrust beneath the lowest deep 545
Of earth and ocean, where Iapetus
And Saturn lie, uncheer'd by ray of sun
Or breath of air, in Tartarus profound.
Though there thou wert to banishment consign'd,
I should not heed, but thy reproaches hear 550
Unmov'd; for viler thing is none than thou."
He said, but white-arm'd Juno answer'd not.

The sun, now sunk beneath the ocean wave,
Drew o'er the teeming earth the veil of night.
The Trojans saw, reluctant, day's decline; 555
But on the Greeks the shades of darkness fell
Thrice welcome, object of their earnest pray'rs.

The noble Hector then to council call'd
The Trojan leaders; from the ships apart
He led them, by the eddying river's side, 560
To a clear space of ground, from corpses free.
They from their cars dismounting, to the words

Of godlike Hector listen'd: in his hand
His massive spear he held, twelve cubits long,
Whose glitt'ring point flash'd bright, with hoop of gold 565
Encircled round; on this he leant, and said,
"Hear me, ye Trojans, Dardans, and Allies;
I hop'd that to the breezy heights of Troy
We might ere now in triumph have return'd,
The Grecian ships and all the Greeks destroy'd; 570
But night hath come too soon, and sav'd awhile
The Grecian army and their stranded ships.
Then yield we to the night; prepare the meal;
Unyoke your horses, and before them place
Their needful forage; from the city bring 575
Oxen and sheep; the luscious wine provide;
Bring bread from out our houses; and collect
Good store of fuel, that the livelong night,
Ev'n till the dawn of day, may broadly blaze
Our num'rous watchfires, and illumine the Heav'ns; 580
Lest, ev'n by night, the long-hair'd Greeks should seek
O'er the broad bosom of the sea to fly,
* That so not unassail'd they may embark,
Nor undisturb'd; but haply some may bear,

Ev'n to their homes, the mem'ry of a wound 585
Receiv'd from spear or arrow, as on board
They leap'd in haste; and others too may fear
To tempt with hostile arms the pow'r of Troy.
Then let the sacred heralds' voice proclaim
Throughout the city, that the stripling youths 590
And hoary-headed sires allot themselves
In sev'ral watches to the Heav'n-built tow'rs.
Charge too the women, in their houses each,
To kindle blazing fires; let careful watch
Be set, lest, in the absence of the men, 595
The town by secret ambush be surpris'd.
Such, valiant Trojans, is th' advice I give;
And what to-night your wisdom shall approve
Will I, at morn, before the Trojans speak.
Hopeful, to Jove I pray, and all the Gods, 600
To chase from hence these fate-inflicted hounds,
By fate sent hither on their dark-ribb'd ships.
Now keep we through the night our watchful guard;
And with the early dawn, equipp'd in arms,
Upon their fleet our angry battle pour. 605
Then shall I know if 'Tydeus' valiant son

Back from the ships shall drive me to the walls,
Or I, triumphant, bear his bloody spoils :
To-morrow morn his courage will decide,
If he indeed my onset will await. 610
But ere to-morrow's sun be high in Heav'n,
He, 'mid the foremost, if I augur right,
Wounded and bleeding in the dust shall lie,
And many a comrade round him. Would to Heav'n
I were as sure to be from age and death 615
Exempt, and held in honour as a God,
Phœbus, or Pallas, as I am assur'd
The coming day is fraught with ill to Greece."

Thus Hector spoke; the Trojans shouted loud:
Then from the yoke the sweating steeds they loos'd, 620
And tether'd each beside their sev'ral cars:
Next from the city speedily they brought
Oxen and sheep; the luscious wine procur'd;
Brought bread from out their houses, and good store
Of fuel gather'd; wafted from the plain, 625
The winds to Heav'n the sav'ry odours bore.
Full of proud hopes, upon the pass of war,
All night they camp'd; and frequent blaz'd their fires.

As when in Heav'n, around the glitt'ring moon
The stars shine bright amid the breathless air; 630
And ev'ry crag, and ev'ry jutting peak
Stands boldly forth, and ev'ry forest glade;
Ev'n to the gates of Heav'n is open'd wide
The boundless sky; shines each particular star
Distinct; joy fills the gazing shepherd's heart. 635
So bright, so thickly scatter'd o'er the plain,
Before the walls of Troy, between the ships
And Xanthus' stream, the Trojan watchfires blaz'd.

A thousand fires burnt brightly; and round each
Sat fifty warriors in the ruddy glare; 640
With store of provender before them laid,
Barley and rye, the tether'd horses stood
Beside the cars, and waited for the morn. 643

BOOK IX.

THUS kept their watch the Trojans ; but the Greeks

Dire Panic held, companion of chill Fear,
Their bravest struck with grief unbearable.
As when two stormy winds ruffle the sea,
Boreas and Zephyr, from the hills of Thrace
With sudden gust descending ; the dark waves
Rear high their angry crests, and toss on shore
Masses of tangled weed ; such stormy grief
The breast of ev'ry Grecian warrior rent.

Atrides, heart-struck, wander'd to and fro, 10
And to the clear-voic'd heralds gave command
To call, but not with proclamation loud,
Each sev'ral man to council ; he himself
Spar'd not his labour, mixing with the chiefs.
Sally they sat in council ; Atreus' son, 15
Weeping, arose ; as some dark-water'd fount
Pours o'er a craggy steep its gloomy stream ;

Then with deep groans th' assembled Greeks address'd :

“O friends! the chiefs and councillors of Greece,
Grievous, and all unlook'd for, is the blow 20

Which Jove hath dealt me; by his promise led

I hop'd to raze the strong-built walls of Troy,

And home return in safety; but it seems

He falsifies his word, and bids me now

Return to Argos, frustrate of my hope, 25

Dishonour'd, and with grievous loss of men.

Such now appears th' o'er-ruling sov'reign will

Of Saturn's son, who oft hath sunk the heads

Of many a lofty city in the dust,

And yet will sink; for mighty is his hand. 30

Hear then my counsel; let us all agree

Home to direct our course; since here in vain

We strive to take the well-built walls of Troy.”

The monarch spoke; they all in silence heard:

In speechless sorrow long they sat: at length 35

Rose valiant Diomed, and thus he spoke:

“Atrides, I thy folly must confront,

As is my right, in council; thou, O King!

Be not offended: once, among the Greeks

Thou held'st my prowess light, and with the name 40
Of coward branded me; how justly so
Is known to all the Greeks, both young and old.
On thee the deep-designing Saturn's son
In diff'ring measure hath his gifts bestow'd:
A throne he gives thee, higher far than all; 45
But valour, noblest boon of Heav'n, denies.
How canst thou hope the sons of Greece shall prove
Such heartless dastards as thy words suppose?
If homeward to return thy mind be fix'd,
Depart; the way is open, and the ships, 50
Which from Mycenæ follow'd thee in crowds,
Are close at hand, and ready to be launch'd.
Yet will the other long-hair'd Greeks remain
Till Priam's city fall: nay, though the rest
Betake them to their ships, and sail for home, 55
Yet I and Sthenelus, we two, will fight
Till Troy be ours; for Heav'n is on our side."

Thus he; the sons of Greece, with loud applause,
The speech of valiant Diomed confirm'd.

Then aged Nestor rose, and thus began: 60
"Tydides, eminent thou art in war;

And in the council thy compeers in age
Must yield to thee; thy present words, no Greek
Can censure, or gainsay; and yet the end
Thou hast not reach'd, and object of debate. 65
But thou art young, and for thine age mightst be
My latest born; yet dost thou to the Kings
Sage counsel give, and well in season speak.
But now will I, that am thine elder far,
Go fully through the whole; and none my words 70
May disregard, not ev'n Atrides' self.
Religious, social, and domestic ties
Alike he violates, who willingly
Would court the horrors of internal strife.
But yield we now to th' influence of night: 75
Prepare the meal; and let the sev'ral guards
Be posted by the ditch, without the wall.
This duty on the younger men I lay:
Then, Agamemnon, thou thy part perform;
For thou art King supreme; the Elders all, 80
As meet and seemly, to the feast invite:
Thy tents are full of wine, which Grecian ships
O'er the wide sea bring day by day from Thrace;

Nor lack'st thou aught thy guests to entertain,
And many own thy sway; when all are met, 85
His counsel take, who gives the best advice;
Great need we have of counsel wise and good,
When close beside our ships the hostile fires
Are burning: who can this unmov'd behold?
This night our ruin or our safety sees." 90

He said; and they, assenting, heard his speech.
Forth with their followers went th' appointed guards,
The princely Thrasymedes, Nestor's son,
Ascalaphus, and bold Ialmenus,
Two valiant sons of Mars; Meriones, 95
And Aphareus, and brave Deïpyrus,
And godlike Lycomedes, Creon's son.
Sev'n were the leaders; and with each went forth
A hundred gallant youths, with lances arm'd.
Between the ditch and wall they took their post: 100
There lit their fires, and there the meal prepar'd.

Then for th' assembled Elders in his tent
An ample banquet Agamemnon spread;
They on the viands, set before them, fell:
The rage of thirst and hunger satisfied, 105

The aged Nestor first his mind disclos'd;
He who, before, the sagest counsel gave,
Now thus with prudent words began, and said:

“Most mighty Agamemnon, King of men,
With thee, Atrides, my discourse shall end, 110
With thee begin: o'er many nations thou
Hold'st sov'reign sway; since Jove to thee hath giv'n
The sceptre, and the high prerogative,
To be thy people's judge and counsellor,
'Tis thine to speak the word, 'tis thine to hear 115
And to determine, when some other chief
Suggestions offers in the gen'ral cause:
What counsel shall prevail, depends on thee:
Yet will I say what seems to me the best.
Sounder opinion none can hold than this, 120
Which I maintain, and ever have maintain'd,
Ev'n from the day when thou, great King, didst bear
The fair Briseis from Achilles' tent
Despite his anger—not by my advice:
I fain would have dissuaded thee, but thou, 125
Following the dictates of thy wrathful pride,
Didst to our bravest wrong, dishon'ring him

Whom ev'n th' Immortals honour'd; for his prize
Thou took'st and still retain'st; but let us now
Consider, if ev'n yet, with costly gifts 130
And soothing words, we may his 'wrath appease."

To whom the monarch Agamemnon thus:
"Father, too truly thou recall'st my fault:
I err'd, nor will deny it; as a host
Is he whom Jove in honour holds, as now 135
Achilles hon'ring, he confounds the Greeks.
But if I err'd, by evil impulse led,
Fain would I now conciliate him, and pay
An ample penalty; before you all
I pledge myself rich presents to bestow. 140
Sev'n tripods will I give, untouch'd by fire;
Of gold, ten talents, twenty caldrons bright,
Twelve pow'ful horses, on the course renown'd,
Who by their speed have many prizes won.
Not empty-handed could that man be deem'd, 145
Nor poor in gold, who but so much possess'd
As by those horses has for me been won.
Sev'n women too, well skill'd in household cares,
Lesbians, whom I selected for myself,

That day he captur'd Lesbos' goodly isle, 150
In beauty far surpassing all their sex :
These will I give ; and with them will I send
The fair Briseis, her whom from his tent
I bore away ; and add a solemn oath,
I ne'er approach'd her bed, nor held with her 155
Such intercourse as man with woman holds.
All these shall now be his : but if the Gods
Shall grant us Priam's city to destroy,
Of gold and brass, when we divide the spoil,
With countless heaps he shall a vessel freight, 160
And twenty captives he himself shall choose,
All only less than Argive Helen fair.
And if it be our fate to see again
The teeming soil of Argos, he shall be
My son by marriage ; and in honour held 165
As is Orestes, who, my only son,
Is rear'd at home in luxury and ease.
Three daughters fair I have, Chrysothemis,
Iphianassa, and Laodice ;
Of these, whiche'er he will, to Peleus' house, 170
No portion ask'd for, he shall take to wife ;

And with her will I add such wedding gifts,
As never man before to daughter gave.
Sev'n prosp'rous towns besides; Cardamyle,
And Enope, and Ira's grassy plains; 175
And Pheræ, and Antheia's pastures deep,
Æpeia fair, and vine-clad Pedasus;
All by the sea, by sandy Pylos' bounds.
The dwellers there in flocks and herds are rich,
And, as a God, shall honour him with gifts, 180
And to his sceptre ample tribute pay.
This will I do, so he his wrath remit:
Then let him yield (Pluto alone remains
Unbending and inexorable; and thence
Of all the Gods is most abhorr'd of men), 185
To me submitting, as in royal pow'r
Superior far, and more advanc'd in age."

To whom Gerenian Nestor thus replied:
"Most mighty Agamemnon, King of men,
Atrides, not unworthy are the gifts, 190
Which to Achilles thou design'st to send:
Then to the tent of Peleus' son in haste
Let us our chosen messengers despatch:

Whom I shall choose, let them consent to go.
Then first of all let Phoenix lead the way, 195
Belov'd of Jove; the mighty Ajax next:
With them, Ulysses sage; and let them take,
Of heralds, Hodius and Eurybates.
Bring now the hallowing water for our hands;
And bid be silent, while to Saturn's son, 200
That he have mercy, we address our pray'r."

He said, and well his counsel pleas'd them all;
The heralds pour'd the water on their hands;
The youths, attending, crown'd the bowls with wine,
And in due order serv'd the cups to all. 205
Then, their libations made, when each with wine
Had satisfied his soul, from out the tent
Of Agamemnon, Atreus' son, they pass'd;
And many a caution aged Nestor gave,
With rapid glance to each, Ulysses chief, 210
How best to soften Peleus' matchless son.

Beside the many-dashing ocean's shore
They mov'd along; and many a pray'r address'd
To Neptune, Ocean's Earth-surrounding God,
That he to gentle counsels would incline 215

The haughty soul of great Æacides.

When to the ships and tents they came, where lay

The warlike Myrmidons, their chief they found

His spirit soothing with a sweet-ton'd lyre,

Of curious work, with silver band adorn'd; 220

Part of the spoil he took, when he destroy'd

Eëtion's wealthy town; on this he play'd,

Soothing his soul, and sang of warriors' deeds.

Before the chief, in silence and alone

Patroclus sat, upon Achilles fix'd 225

His eyes, awaiting till the song should cease.

The envoys forward stepp'd, Ulysses first,

And stood before him; from such, amaz'd,

And holding still his lyre, Achilles sprang,

Leaving the seat whereon they found him plac'd; 230

And at their entrance rose Patroclus

Waving his hand, Achilles, swift of foot,

Address'd them: "Welcome, friends! as friends ye come:

Some great occasion surely to my tent

Hath brought the men who are, of all the Greeks, 235

Despite my anger, dearest to my heart."

Thus as he spoke, he led them in, and plac'd

On couches spread with purple carpets o'er,

Then thus address'd Patroclus at his side:

"Son of Menœtius, set upon the board 240

A larger bowl, and stronger mix the wine,

And serve a cup to each: beneath my roof

This night my dearest friends I entertain."

He said; Patroclus his commands obey'd;

And in the fire-light plac'd an ample tray, 245

And on it laid of goat's flesh and of sheep's

A saddle each; and with them, rich in fat,

A chine of well-fed hog; Automedon

Held fast, while great Achilles carv'd the joints.

The meat, prepar'd, was plac'd upon the spits: 250

Patroclus kindled then a blazing fire:

And when the fire burnt hotly, and the flame

Subsided, blowing embers out,

And hung the spits above; then sprinkled o'er

The meat with salt, and lifted from the stand. 255

The viands cook'd and plac'd upon the board,

From baskets fair Patroclus portion'd out

The bread to each; the meat Achilles shar'd.

Facing the sage Ulysses, sat the host

On th' other side the tent; and bade his friend, 260
Patroclus, give the Gods their honours due :
He in the fire the wonted off'rings burnt :
They on the viands set before them fell.
The rage of thirst and hunger satisfied,
Ajax to Phoenix sign'd : Ulysses saw 265
The sign, and rising, fill'd a cup with wine,
And pledg'd Achilles thus : " To thee I drink,
Achilles ! nobly is thy table spread,
As heretofore in Agamemnon's tent,
So now in thine ; abundant is the feast : 270
But not the pleasures of the banquet now
We have in hand : impending o'er our arms
Grave cause of fear, illustrious chief, we see ;
Grave doubts, to save, or see destroy'd our ships,
If thou, great warrior, put not forth thy might. 275
For close beside the ships and wall are camp'd
The haughty Trojans and renown'd allies :
Their watch-fires frequent burn throughout the camp ;
And loud their boast, that nought shall stay their hands,
Until our dark-ribb'd ships be made their prey. 280
Jove too for them, with fav'ring augury

Sends forth his lightning; boastful of his strength,
And firmly trusting in the aid of Jove,
Hector, resistless, rages; nought he fears
Or God or man, with martial fury fir'd. 285
He prays, impatient, for th' approach of morn;
Then, breaking through the lofty sterns, resolv'd
To the devouring flames to give the ships,
And slay the crews, bewilder'd in the smoke.
And much my mind misgives me, lest the Gods 290
His threats fulfil, and we be fated here
To perish, far from Argos' grassy plains.
Up then! if in their last extremity
Thy spirit inclines, though late, to save the Greeks
Sore press'd by Trojan arms: lest thou thyself 295
Hereafter feel remorse; the evil done
Is past all cure; then thou reflect betimes
How from the Greeks to ward the day of doom.
Dear friend, remember now thy father's words,
The aged Peleus, when to Atreus' son 300
He sent thee forth from Phthia, how he said,
'My son, the boon of strength, if so they will,
Juno or Pallas have the pow'r to give;

But thou thyself thy haughty spirit must curb,
For better far is gentle courtesy : 305
And cease from angry strife, that so the Greeks
The more may honour thee, both young and old.
Such were the words thine aged father spoke,
Which thou hast now forgotten ; yet, ev'n now,
Pause for awhile, and let thine anger cool ; 310
And noble gifts, so thou thy wrath remit,
From Agamemnon shalt thou bear away.
Listen to me, while I recount the gifts
Which in his tent he pledg'd him to bestow.
Sev'n tripods promis'd he, untouch'd by fire, 315
Of gold, ten talents, twenty caldrons bright,
Twelve pow'rful horses, in the course renown'd,
Who by their speed have many prizes won,
Not empty-handed could that man be deem'd,
Nor poor in gold, who but so much possess'd 320
As by those horses has for him been won.
Sev'n women too, well skill'd in household cares,
Lesbians, whom he selected for himself,
That day thou captur'dst Lesbos' goodly isle,
In beauty far surpassing all their sex. 325

These will he give; and with them will he send
The fair Briseis, her whom from thy tent
He bore away; and add a solemn oath,
He ne'er approach'd her bed, nor held with her
Such intercourse as man with woman holds. 330
All these shall now be thine: but if the Gods
Shall grant us Priam's city to destroy,
Of gold and brass, when we divide the spoil,
With countless heaps a vessel shalt thou freight,
And twenty captives thou thyself shalt choose, 335
All only less than Argive Helen fair.
And if it be our fate to see again
The teeming soil of Argos, thou mayst be
His son by marriage, and in honour held
As is Orestes, who, his only son, 340
Is rear'd at home in luxury and ease.
Three daughters fair are his, Chrysothemis,
Iphianassa, and Laodice;
Of these whiche'er thou wilt, to Peleus' house,
No portion ask'd for, thou shalt take to wife; 345
And with her will he add such wedding gifts,
As never man before to daughter gave.

Sev'n prosp'rous towns besides ; Cardamyle,
And Enope, and Ira's grassy plains,
And Phæræ, and Antheia's pastures deep, 350
Æpeia fair, and vine-clad Pedasus ;
All by the sea, by sandy Pylos' bounds.
The dwellers there in flocks and herds are rich,
And, as a God, will honour thee with gifts,
And to thy sceptre ample tribute pay. 355
All these he gives, so thou thy wrath remit.
But if thou hold Atrides in such hate,
Him and his gifts, yet let thy pity rest
On all the other Greeks, thus sore bested ;
By whom thou shalt be honour'd as a God : 360
For great the triumph that thou now mayst gain ;
Ev'n Hector's self is now within thy reach ;
For he is near at hand ; and in his pride
And martial fury deems that none, of all
Our ships contain, can rival him in arms." 365

Whom answer'd thus Achilles, swift of foot :
" Heav'n-born Ulysses, sage in council, son
Of great Laertes, I must frankly speak
My mind at once, my fix'd resolve declare :

That from henceforth I may not by the Greeks, 370

By this man and by that, be importun'd.

Him as the gates of hell my soul abhors,

Whose outward words his inmost thoughts conceal.

Hear then what seems to me the wisest course.

On me nor Agamemnon, Atreus' son, 375

Nor others shall prevail, since nought is gain'd

By toil unceasing in the battle field.

Who nobly fight, but share with those who skulk ;

Like honours gain the coward and the brave ;

Alike the idlers and the active die : 380

And nought it profits me, though day by day

In constant toil I set my life at stake ;

But as a bird, though ill she fare herself,

Brings to her callow brood the food she takes,

So I through many a sleepless night have lain, 385

And many a bloody day have labour'd through,

Engag'd in battle on your wives' behalf.

Twelve cities have I taken with my ships ;

Eleven more by land, on Trojan soil :

From all of these abundant stores of wealth 390

I took, and all to Agamemnon gave ;

He, safe on board his ships, my spoils receiv'd,
A few divided, but the most retain'd.
To other chiefs and Kings he meted out
Their sev'ral portions, and they hold them still; 395
From me, from me alone of all the Greeks,
He bore away, and keeps my cherish'd wife;
Well! let him keep her, solace of his bed!
But say then, why do Greeks with Trojans fight?
Why hath Atrides brought this mighty host 400
To Troy, if not in fair-hair'd Helen's cause?
Of mortals are there none that love their wives,
Save Atreus' sons alone? or do not all,
Who boast the praise of sense and virtue, love
And cherish each his own? as her I lov'd 405
Ev'n from my soul, though captive of my spear.
Now, since he once hath robb'd me, and deceiv'd,
Let him not seek my aid; I know him now,
And am not to be won; let him devise,
With thee, Ulysses, and the other Kings, 410
How best from hostile fires to save his ships.
He hath completed many mighty works
Without my aid; hath built a lofty wall,

And dug a trench around it, wide and deep,
And in the trench hath fix'd a palisade ; 415
Nor so the warrior-slayer Hector's might
Can keep in check ; while I was in the field,
Not far without the walls would Hector range
His line of battle, nor beyond the Oak
And Scæan gates would venture ; there indeed 420
He once presum'd to meet me, hand to hand,
And from my onset narrowly escap'd.
But as with Hector now no more I fight,
To-morrow morn, my off'rings made to Jove,
And all the Gods, and freighted well my ships, 425
And launch'd upon the main, thyself shall see,
If that thou care to see, my vessels spread
O'er the broad bosom of the Hellespont,
My lusty crews plying the vig'rous oar ;
And if th' Earth-shaker send a fav'ring breeze, 430
Three days will bear us home to Phthia's shore.
There did I leave abundant store of wealth,
When hitherward I took my luckless way ;
Thither from hence I bear, of ruddy gold,
And brass, and women fair, and iron hoar 435

The share assign'd me ; but my chiefest prize
The monarch Agamemnon, Atreus' son,
Himself who gave, with insult takes away.
To him then speak aloud the words I send,
That all may know his crimes, if yet he hope 440
Some other Greek by treach'rous wiles to cheat,
Cloth'd as he is in shamelessness! my glance,
All brazen as he is, he dare not meet.
I share no more his counsels, nor his acts ;
He hath deceiv'd me once, and wrong'd ; again 445
He shall not cozen me ! Of him, enough !
I pass him by, whom Jove hath robb'd of sense.
His gifts I loathe, and spurn ; himself I hold
At a hair's worth ; and would he proffer me
Tenfold or twentyfold of all he has, 450
Or ever may be his ; or all the gold
Sent to Orchomenos or royal Thebes,
Egyptian, treasurehouse of countless wealth,
Who boasts her hundred gates, through each of which
With horse and car two hundred warriors march : 455
Nay, were his gifts in number as the sand,
Or dust upon the plain, yet ne'er will I

By Agamemnon be prevail'd upon,
Till I have paid him back my heart's offence.
Nor e'er of Agamemnon, Atreus' son, 460
Will I a daughter wed; not were she fair
As golden Venus, and in works renown'd
As Pallas, blue-ey'd Maid, yet her ev'n so
I wed not; let him choose some other Greek,
Some fitting match, of nobler blood than mine. 465
But should the Gods in safety bring me home,
At Peleus' hands I may receive a wife;
And Greece can boast of many a lovely maid,
In Hellas or in Phthia, daughters fair
Of chiefs who hold their native fortresses: 470
Of these, at will, a wife I may select:
And ofttimes hath my warlike soul inclin'd
To take a wedded wife, a fitting bride,
And aged Peleus' wealth in peace enjoy.
For not the stores which Troy, they say, contain'd 475
In peaceful times, ere came the sons of Greece,
Nor all the treasures which Apollo's shrine,
The Archer-God, in rock-built Pythos holds,
May weigh with life; of oxen and of sheep

Successful forays may good store provide; 480
And tripods may be gain'd, and noble steeds:
But when the breath of man hath pass'd his lips,
Nor strength nor foray can the loss repair.
I by my Goddess-mother have been warn'd,
The silver-footed Thetis, that o'er me 485
A double chance of destiny impends:
If here remaining, round the walls of Troy
I wage the war, I ne'er shall see my home,
But then undying glory shall be mine:
If I return, and see my native land, 490
My glory all is gone; but length of life
Shall then be mine, and death be long deferr'd.
If others ask'd my counsel, I should say,
'Homeward direct your course; of lofty Troy
Ye see not yet the end; all-seeing Jove 495
O'er her extends his hand; on him relying
Her people all with confidence are fill'd.'
Go then; my answer to the chiefs of Greece
Speak boldly—such the privilege of age—
Bid that some better counsel they devise 500
To save their ships and men; their present scheme,

My anger unappeas'd, avails them nought.
But Phoenix here shall stay, and sleep to-night;
And with the morrow he with me shall sail
And seek our native land, if so he will; 505
For not by force will I remove him hence."

He said; they all, confounded by his words,
In silence heard; so sternly did he speak.
At length, in tears, the aged Phoenix spoke,
For greatly fear'd he for the ships of Greece: 510
"If, great Achilles, on returning home
Thy mind is set, nor canst thou be induc'd
To save the ships from fire, so fierce thy wrath;
How then, dear boy, can I remain behind,
Alone? whom with thee aged Peleus sent, 515
That day when he in Agamemnon's cause
From Phthia sent thee, inexperienc'd yet
In all the duties of confed'rate war,
And sage debate, on which attends renown.
Me then he sent, instructor of thy youth, 520
To prompt thy language, and thine acts to guide.
So not from thee, dear boy, can I consent
To part, though Heav'n should undertake my age

To wipe away, and vig'rous youth restore,
Such as I boasted, when from Greece I fled 525
Before my angry sire, Amyntor, son
Of Ormenus; a fair-hair'd concubine
Cause of the quarrel; her my father lov'd,
And by her love estrang'd, despis'd his wife,
My mother; oft she pray'd me to seduce, 530
To vex th' old man, my father's concubine;
I yielded; he, suspecting, on my head
A curse invok'd, and on the Furies call'd
His curse to witness, that upon his knees
No child, by me begotten, e'er should sit: 535
His curse the Gods have heard, and ratified,
Th' infernal King, and awful Proserpine.
Then would I fain have slain him with the sword,
Had not some God my rising fury quell'd,
And set before my mind the public voice, 540
The odium I should have to bear 'mid Greeks,
If branded with the name of parricide.
But longer in my angry father's house
To dwell, my spirit brook'd not, though my friends
And kinsmen all besought me to remain; 545

And many a goodly sheep, and many a steer
They slew, and many swine, with fat o'erlaid,
They sing'd, and roasted o'er the burning coals;
And drank in many a cup the old man's wine.
Nine nights they kept me in continual watch, 550
By turns relieving guards. The fires meanwhile
Burnt constant: one beneath the porch that fac'd
The well-fenc'd court; one in the vestibule
Before my chamber door. The tenth dark night
My chamber's closely-fitting doors I broke, 555
And lightly vaulted o'er the court-yard fence,
By guards alike and servant maids unmark'd.
Alone I fled through all the breadth of Greece,
Until at length to Phthia's fruitful soil,
Mother of flocks, to Peleus' realm I came, 560
Who kindly welcom'd me, and with such love
As to his only son, his well-belov'd,
A father shows, his gen'rous gifts bestow'd.
He gave me wealth, he gave me ample rule;
And on the bounds of Phthia bade me dwell, 565
And o'er the Dolopes hold sov'reign sway.
Thee too, Achilles, rival of the Gods,

Such as thou art I made thee; from my soul
I lov'd thee; nor wouldst thou with others go
Or to the meal, or in the house be fed, 570
Till on my knee thou satt'st, and by my hand
Thy food were cut, the cup were tender'd thee;
And often, in thy childish helplessness,
The bosom of my dress with wine was drench'd:
Such care I had of thee, such pains I took, 575
Rememb'ring that by Heav'n's decree, no son
Of mine I e'er might see; then thee I made,
Achilles, rival of the Gods, my son,
That thou mightst be the guardian of mine age.
But thou, Achilles, curb thy noble rage; 580
A heart implacable beseems thee not.
The Gods themselves, in virtue, honour, strength,
Excelling thee, may yet be mollified;
For they, when mortals have transgress'd, or fail'd
To do aright, by sacrifice and pray'r, 585
Libations and burnt-off'rings, may be sooth'd.
Pray'rs are the daughters of immortal Jove;
But halt, and wrinkled, and of feeble sight,
They plod in Ate's track; while Ate, strong

And swift of foot, outstrips their laggard pace, 590
And, dealing woe to man, o'er all the earth
Before them flies: they, following, heal her wounds.
Him who with honour welcomes their approach,
They greatly aid, and hear him when he prays;
But who rejects, and sternly casts them off, 595
To Saturn's son they go, and make their pray'r
That Ate follow him and claim her dues.
Then to the daughters of immortal Jove,
Do thou, Achilles, show the like respect,
That many another brave man's heart hath sway'd. 600
If to thy tent no gifts Atrides brought,
With promises of more, but still retain'd
His vehement enmity, I could not ask
That thou thy cherish'd anger shouldst discard,
And aid the Greeks, how great so-e'er their need. 605
But now large off'rings hath he giv'n, and more
Hath promis'd; and, of all the Greeks, hath sent
To pray thine aid, the men thou lov'st the best.
Discredit not their mission, nor their words.
Till now, I grant thee, none could blame thy wrath. 610
In praise of men in ancient days renown'd,

This have we heard, that how-so-e'er might rage
Their hostile feuds, their anger might be still
By gifts averted, and by words appeas'd.
One case I bear in mind, in times long past, 615
And not in later days; and here, 'mid friends,
How all occur'd, will I at length recite.
Time was, that with Ætolia's warlike bands
Round Calydon the Acarnanians fought
With mutual slaughter: these to save the town, 620
The Acarnanians burning to destroy.
This curse of war the golden-thronèd Queen
Diana sent, in anger that from her
Ceneus the first-fruits of his field withheld.
The other Gods their hecatombs receiv'd; 625
Diana's shrine alone no off'rings deck'd,
Neglected, or o'erlook'd; the sin was great;
And in her wrath the arrow-darting Queen
A savage wild-boar sent, with gleaming tusks,
Which, Ceneus' vineyard haunting, wrought him harm. 630
There laid he prostrate many a stately tree,
With root and branch, with blossom and with fruit.
Him Meleager, son of Ceneus, slew,

With youths and dogs from all the neighbouring towns
Collected; smaller force had not avail'd, 635
So huge he was, so fierce; and many a youth
Had by his tusks been laid upon the bier.
A fierce contention then the Goddess rais'd,
For the boar's head and bristly hide, between
The Acarnanian and th' Ætolian bands. 640
While warlike Meleager kept the field,
So long the Acarnanians far'd but ill;
Nor dar'd, despite the numbers of their host,
Maintain their ground before the city walls.
When he to anger yielded, which sometimes 645
Swells in the bosom ev'n of wisest men,
Incens'd against his mother, he withdrew
To Cleopatra fair, his wedded wife;
(Marpessa her, Evenus' daughter, bore
To Idas, strongest man of all who then 650
Were living, who against Apollo's self
For the neat-footed maiden bent his bow.
Her parents call'd the child Alcyone,
In mem'ry of the tears her mother shed,
Rival of Alcyon's melancholy fate, 655

When by far-darting Phœbus forc'd away).
With her, retiring from the field, he nurs'd
His wrath; resenting thus his mother's curse,
Althæa; she her brother's death bore hard,
And pray'd to Heav'n above, and with her hands 660
Beating the solid earth, the nether pow'rs,
Pluto and awful Proserpine, implor'd,
Down on her knees, her bosom wet with tears,
Death on her son invoking; from the depths
Of Erebus Erinnys heard her pray'r, 665
Gloom-haunting Goddess, dark and stern of heart.
Soon round the gates the din of battle rose,
The tow'rs by storm assaulted; then his aid
Th' Ætolian Elders and the sacred priests
With promises of great reward implor'd. 670
A fruitful plot they bade him set apart,
The richest land in lovely Calydon,
Of fifty acres: half for vineyard meet,
And half of fertile plain, for tillage clear'd.
Upon the threshold of his lofty rooms 675
Old Æneus stood, and at the portals clos'd
He knock'd in vain, a suppliant to his son.

His sisters and his brother join'd their pray'rs,
But sterner his rejection of their suit ;
The friends he valued most, and lov'd the best, 680
Yet they too fail'd his fix'd resolve to shake ;
Till to his very doors the war had reach'd,
The foe upon the tow'rs, the town in flames :
Then Meleager's beauteous wife, at length,
In tears, beseeching him, the thousand ills 685
Recall'd, which on a captur'd town attend ;
The slaughter'd men, the city burnt with fire,
The helpless children and deep-bosom'd dames
A prey to strangers. List'ning to the tale,
His spirit was rous'd within him ; and again 690
He took the field, and donn'd his glitt'ring arms.
Thus did his act from doom th' Ætolians save
Spontaneous ; yet he gain'd not, though he sav'd,
The rich reward they once were pledg'd to give.
But be not thou like him, nor let thy God 695
Turn thitherward thy thoughts ; our ships on fire,
Thine aid will less be priz'd ; come, take the gifts,
And as a God be honour'd by the Greeks.
If thou hereafter, unsolicited,

The battle join, the Greeks thou mayst protect, 700
But not an equal share of honour gain."

Whom answer'd thus Achilles, swift of foot :
" Phoenix, my second father, rev'rend sire,
Such honours move me not ; my honour comes
From Jove, whose will it is that I should here 705
Remain beside the ships, while I retain
Breath in my lungs and vigour in my limbs.
This too I say, and bear it in thy mind :
Disturb me not with weeping and complaints,
To do Atrides grace ; if him thou love, 710
My love for thee perchance may turn to hate :
My friend should honour him who honours me.
But come with me, and of my kingdom half,
And equal honours shalt thou share with me.
These shall our message bear ; stay thou the while, 715
And on soft couch repose ; to-morrow morn
Will we determine or to sail or stay."

He said, and with his eyebrows gave a sign
In silence to Patroclus, to prepare
A bed for Phoenix, that without delay 720
The rest might leave the tent ; then thus began

Ajax, the godlike son of Telamon :

“ Ulysses sage, Laertes' high-born son,

Depart we now ; for this way our discourse

Can lead to no result ; behoves us bear 725

Our tidings, all unwelcome as they are,

Back to the chiefs awaiting our return.

Achilles hath allow'd his noble heart

To cherish rancour and malignant hate ;

Nor recks he of his old companions' love, 730

Wherewith we honour'd him above the rest.

Relentless he ! a son's or brother's death,

By payment of a fine, may be aton'd ;

The slayer may remain in peace at home,

The debt discharg'd ; the other will forego, 735

The forfeiture receiv'd, his just revenge ;

But thou maintain'st a stern, obdurate mood,

And for a single girl ! we offer sev'n,

Surpassing fair, and other gifts to boot.

We now bespeak thy courtesy ; respect 740

Thy hearth ; remember that beneath thy roof

We stand, deputed by the gen'ral voice

Of all the host ; and fain would claim to be,

Of all the Greeks, thy best and dearest friends."

Whom answer'd thus Achilles, swift of foot: 745

"Illustrious Ajax, son of Telamon,

Without offence hast thou thy message giv'n;

But fury fills my soul, whene'er I think

How Agamemnon, 'mid th' assembled Greeks,

Insulting, held me forth to public scorn, 750

As some dishonour'd, houseless vagabond.

But go ye now, and bear my answer back:

No more in bloody war will I engage,

Till noble Hector, Priam's godlike son,

O'er slaughter'd Greeks, your ships enwrapp'd in fire, 755

Shall reach the quarters of the Myrmidons.

Ere he assail my ship and tents, I think

That Hector, valiant as he is, will pause."

Thus he: they each the double goblet rais'd,

And, to the Gods their due libations pour'd, 760

Ulysses leading, to the ships return'd.

Meanwhile Patroclus bade th' attendant maids

Prepare a bed for Phoenix; they obey'd,

And quickly laid the bed with fleeces warm,

And rugs, and linen light and fine o'erspread. 765

There slept th' old man, and waited for the morn.

Within the tent's recess Achilles slept;

And by his side, from Lesbos captive brought,

Daughter of Phorbas, Diomedes fair:

On th' other side Patroclus lay; with him 770

The graceful Iphis, whom, when Scyros' isle

He captur'd, and Enyes' rock-built fort,

Achilles to his lov'd companion gave.

When to Atrides' tent the envoys came,

The chiefs, uprising, pledg'd them one by one 775

In golden goblets; then their tidings ask'd.

First Agamemnon, King of men, enquir'd:

"Tell me, renown'd Ulysses, pride of Greece,

What says he: will he save our ships from fire,

Or still, in wrathful mood, withhold his aid?" 780

To whom again Ulysses, stout of heart:

"Most mighty Agamemnon, King of men,

His anger is not quench'd, but fiercer still

It glows; thy gifts and thee alike he spurns;

He bids thee with the other chiefs concert 785

The means thy people and thy ships to save;

And menaces himself at early dawn

To launch his well-trimm'd vessels on the main.

Nay more, he counsels others, so he says,

Homeward to turn, since here of lofty Troy 790

We see not yet the end; all-seeing Jove

O'er her extends his hand; on him relying,

Her people all with confidence are fill'd.

Such was his language; here before you stand

Ajax and both the heralds, sage, grave men, 795

Who with me went, and will confirm my words.

Old Phoenix left we there, so will'd the chief,

That with the morrow he with him may sail,

And seek their native land, if so he will;

For not by force will he remove him hence." 800

Ulysses thus; they all in silence heard,

Amaz'd, so stern the message that he bore.

Long time in silence sat the chiefs of Greece.

Outspoke at length the valiant Diomed:

"Most mighty Agamemnon, King of men, 805

Would that thou ne'er hadst stoop'd with costly gifts

To sue for aid from Peleus' matchless son;

For he before was over-proud, and now

Thine offers will have tenfold swell'd his pride.

But leave we him, according to his will, 810
To go or stay: he then will join the fight,
When his own spirit shall prompt, or Heav'n inspire.
But hear ye all, and do as I advise:
Refresh'd with food and wine (for therein lie
Both strength and courage), turn we to our rest; 815
And when the rosy-finger'd morn appears,
Thyself among the foremost, with bold hearts,
Before our ships both horse and foot array."

He said; and all the chiefs with loud applause
His speech confirm'd; then, due libations pour'd, 820
Each to his sev'ral tent they all withdrew;
Then laid them down, and sought the boon of sleep. 822

BOOK X.

IN night-long slumbers lay the other chiefs
Of all the Greeks, by gentle sleep subdued;
But not on Agamemnon, Atreus' son,
By various cares oppress'd, sweet slumber fell.
As when from Jove, the fair-hair'd Juno's Lord, 5
Flashes the lightning, bringing in its train
Tempestuous storm of mingled rain and hail
Or snow, by winter sprinkled o'er the fields;
Or op'ning wide the rav'nous jaws of war;
So Agamemnon from his inmost heart 10
Pour'd forth in groans his multitudinous grief,
His spirit within him sinking. On the plain
He look'd, and there, alarm'd, the watchfires saw,
Which, far advanc'd before the walls of Troy,
Blaz'd numberless; and thence of pipes and flutes 15
He heard the sound, and busy hum of men.
Upon the ships he look'd, and men of Greece,

And by the roots his hair in handfuls tore
To Jove on high; deep groan'd his mighty heart.
Thus as he mus'd, the wisest course appear'd, 20
With Nestor, son of Neleus, to confer,
If they some scheme in council might devise
To ward destruction from the Grecian host.
He rose, and o'er his body drew his vest,
And underneath his well-turn'd feet he bound 25
His sandals fair; then o'er his shoulders threw,
Down reaching to his feet, a lion's skin,
Tawny and vast; then grasp'd his pond'rous spear.

On Meneläus weigh'd an equal dread;
Nor on his eyes that night had slumber sat, 30
Lest ill befall the Greeks; who, in his cause,
Crossing the wat'ry waste, had come to Troy,
And bold defiance to the Trojans giv'n.
Round his broad chest a panther's skin he threw;
Then on his head his brazen helmet plac'd, 35
And in his brawny hand a lance he bore.
To meet his brother went he forth, of Greece
The mighty monarch, as a God rever'd.
Him by the ship he found, in act to arm;

And welcome was his presence to the King. 40

Then valiant Menelâus first began :

“Why thus in arms, good brother? seek'st thou one

The Trojan camp to spy? I greatly fear

That none will undertake the task, alone

To spy the movements of the hostile camp 45

In the dark night; stout-hearted he must be.”

To whom the monarch Agamemnon thus :

“Great need, my noble brother, have we both

Of sagest counsels, if we hope the Greeks

And Grecian ships from ruin to preserve, 50

Since turn'd against us is the mind of Jove.

To Hector's off'rings most his soul inclines;

For never have I seen, or heard men tell,

How in one day one man has wrought such loss

As Hector, dear to Jove, yet not the son 55

Of God or Goddess, on the Greeks has wrought.

Such deeds hath he achiev'd, such havoc made,

As we shall long in bitter mem'ry keep.

Haste thou amid the ships, and hither bring

Idomeneus and Ajax; I the while 60

Will Nestor rouse, and urge that he with us

The outposts visit, and instruct the guard.
To him they best will listen; for his son
Commands the watch; with him Meriones,
The follower of the King Idomeneus: 65
To them by preference hath this charge been giv'n."

He said; and Menelæus answer'd thus:
"What wouldst thou have me do then? here remain
With them, and wait thy coming, or to them
Thy message give, and follow in thy steps?" 70

Him answer'd Agamemnon, King of men:
"Remain thou here, lest haply we might fail
To meet; for in the camp are many paths.
But thou, where'er thou go'st, each sev'ral man
Address, and ask to rise; to each his name 75
And patronymic giving; pay to each
All due respect; nor bear thee haughtily;
We too must bear our load of toil, on whom
This deep humiliation Jove hath laid."

His brother thus with counsels wise dismiss'd, 80
The King to aged Nestor took his way:
Him by his tent and dark-ribb'd ship he found
On a soft couch; beside him lay his arms,

His shield, two lances, and a glitt'ring helm :

There lay the rich-wrought belt the old man wore, 85

When to the battle, arm'd, he led his troops ;

For nought to age's weakness would he yield.

Raising his head, and on his elbow propp'd,

He question'd thus Atrides : " Who art thou,

That wand'rest through th' encampment thus alone, 90

In the dark night, when other mortals sleep ?

Seek'st thou some mule broke loose, or comrade lost ?

Speak, nor in silence come ; what wouldst thou here ? "

To whom thus Agamemnon, King of men :

" O Nestor ! son of Neleus, pride of Greece, 95

Know me for Agamemnon, Atreus' son, .

On whom hath Jove, beyond the lot of men,

Laid grief that ne'er shall end, while I retain

Breath in my lungs, and vigour in my limbs.

I wander thus, because these eyes of mine 100

Sweet slumber visits not, by cares of war

Oppress'd, and harass'd by the woes of Greece.

Much for the Greeks I fear ; nor keeps my mind

Its wonted firmness ; I am ill at ease ;

And leaps my troubled heart as though 'twould burst 105

My bosom's bounds ; my limbs beneath me shake.
But if thou wilt, since thou too know'st not sleep,
Together to the outposts let us go,
And see if there, by toil and sleep o'erpow'r'd,
The guard repose, neglectful of their watch. 110
The foe is close at hand ; nor are we sure
He may not hazard ev'n a night attack."

To whom Gerenian Nestor thus replied :
"Most mighty Agamemnon, King of men,
Not all the hopes ~~that~~ Hector entertains 115
Shall by the Lord of counsel be fulfill'd ;
For him are toil and danger yet in store,
If but Achilles of his wrath repent.
Gladly will I attend thee ; others too,
Tydides, spearman bold, Ulysses sage, 120
Ajax the swift, and Phyleus' noble son,
Should all be summon'd ; and 'twere well that one
Across the camp should run, to call in haste
The godlike Ajax, and Idomeneus ;
Theirs are the farthest ships, nor near at hand. 125
But, dear to me as Meneläus is,
And highly honour'd, I must blame, that thus

(Though thou shouldst take offence, I needs must say)

He sleeps, and leaves the toil to thee alone.

With all the chiefs he should be busied now, 130

Imploring aid, in this our utmost need."

To whom thus Agamemnon, King of men :

"For other times, old man, reserve thy blame ;

Sometimes, I own, he lags behind, nor takes

His share of labour ; not from indolence, 135

Or want of sense ; but still regarding me ;

Waiting from me an impulse to receive.

But now, before me was he up, and came

To visit me ; and I have sent him on

To call those very men whom thou hast nam'd. 140

Come then ; for we, beside the gates, and guard

Shall find them ; there my orders were to meet."

To whom Gerenian Nestor thus replied ;

"Then none can blame him ; nor can any Greek

Justly refuse his summons to obey." 145

He said, and round his body wrapp'd his vest ;

Then on his feet his sandals fair he bound,

And o'er his shoulders clasp'd a purple cloak,

Doubled, with ample folds, and downy pile ;

Then took his spear, with point of sharpen'd brass, 150
And through the camp prepar'd to take his way.

Gerenian Nestor from his slumbers first
Ulysses, sage as Jove in council, rous'd,
Loud shouting; soon the voice his senses reach'd;
Forth from his tent he came, and thus he spoke: 155
"What cause so urgent leads you, through the camp,
In the dark night to wander thus alone?"

To whom Gerenian Nestor thus replied:
"Ulysses sage, Laertes' godlike son,
Be not offended; great the stress that now 160
Weighs down our army; come thou then with us,
And others let us call; with whom 'tis meet
That we should counsel take, to fight or fly."

He said; Ulysses to the tent return'd;
Then, his broad shield across his shoulders thrown, 165
Came forth again, and with ~~them~~ took his way.
To Diomed, the son of Tydeus, next
They went; and him they found beside his arms,
Without his tent; his comrades slept around,
Their heads upon their bucklers laid; their spears 170
Stood upright, on the butts; the burnish'd brass

Like Heav'n's own lightning, flashing far around.

Stretch'd on a wild bull's hide the chief repos'd,

A gay-wrought carpet roll'd beneath his head.

Gerenian Nestor standing by his side 175

Touch'd with his foot the chief, and thus in tone

Reproachful spoke: "Arouse thee, Tydeus' son!

Why sleep'st thou thus all night? or know'st thou not

That on the very margin of the plain,

And close beside the ships the Trojans lie, 180

And little space between the camps is left?"

Quick rous'd from sleep, thus answer'd Diomed:

"Beshrew thy heart, old man! no labour seems

For thee too hard; are there not younger men

To run about the camp, and summon all 185

The sev'ral chiefs? thou dost too much, old man."

To whom Gerenian Nestor thus replied:

"True, friend, and full of wisdom are thy words;

Good sons indeed I have, and followers brave

And many, who might well my message bear; 190

But great is now the stress that lies on Greece;

For on a razor's edge is balanc'd now,

To all the Greeks, the chance of life or death.

Do thou then go (for thou my younger art),
And if thou pity me, thyself arouse 195
Ajax the swift, and Phyleus' noble son."

He said; the warrior round his shoulders threw,
Down reaching to his feet, a lion's hide,
Tawny and dark; and took his pond'rous spear.
He went, arous'd, and with him brought the chiefs. 200

When to the guard they came, not sunk in sleep
Found they the leaders; but on wakeful watch
Intent, and all alert beside their arms.
As round a sheepfold keep their anxious watch
The dogs, who in the neighbouring thicket hear 205
Some beast, that, bold in search of prey, has come
Down from the mountain; loud the clamours rise
Of men and dogs; all sleep is banish'd thence;
So from their eyes was banish'd sleep, who watch'd
Through that disastrous night; still plainward turning 210
At ev'ry movement in the Trojan camp.

The old man saw, well-pleas'd; and thus address'd
With cheering words the captains of the guard:
"Watch ever thus, good youths; nor be surpris'd
By slumber, lest the foe a triumph gain." 215

This said, he cross'd the ditch, and with him went
The Grecian leaders, to the council call'd:
With them, admitted to the conf'rence, went
Meriones, and Nestor's noble son.
The deep-dug ditch they cross'd, and sat them down 220
Upon an open space, from corpses clear;
Where Hector from the slaughter of the Greeks
Turn'd back, when Ev'ning spread her veil around:
There sat they down, and there the conf'rence held.
Gerenian Nestor first took up the word: 225
"O friends! is any here with heart so bold
Who dares, self-confident, the Trojan camp
To enter? there some straggler he might take,
Or in the camp itself some tidings gain,
What are their secret counsels; if they mean 230
Here by the ships to hold their ground, or back,
Sated with vict'ry, to the town retire.
This could he learn, and hither scatheless bring
His tidings, high as Heav'n in all men's mouths
Would be his praise, and ample his reward. 235
For ev'ry captain of a ship should give
A coal-black ewe, and at her foot a lamb,

A prize beyond compare; and high should be
His place at banquets and at solemn feasts."

He said; but all the chiefs in silence heard; 240
Then rose the valiant Diomed, and said:
"Nestor, that heart is mine; I dare alone
Enter the hostile camp, so close at hand;
Yet were one comrade giv'n me, I should go
With more of comfort, more of confidence. 245
Where two combine, one before other sees
The better course; and ev'n though one alone
The readiest way discover, yet would be
His judgment slower, his decision less."

He said, and many chiefs to Diomed 250
Proffer'd companionship; stood forth at once.
With him to penetrate the Trojan camp,
The two Ajaces, ministers of Mars;
Stood forth Meriones, and eagerly
Stood forth the son of Nestor; Atreus' son, 255
The royal Meneläus, spearman bold,
And stout Ulysses, whose enduring heart
For ev'ry deed of valour was prepar'd.
Rose Agamemnon, King of men, and said:

"Tydides, comrade dearest to my soul, 260

Choose thou thine own companion, whom thou wilt;

Of all the many here that proffer aid

Him whom thou deem'st the best; nor from respect

To persons leave the better man behind,

And take the worse; nor def'rence show to rank, 265

Not though the purest royal blood were his."

In fear for Meneläus thus he spoke:

Then answer'd valiant Diomed, and said;

"If my companion I may freely choose,

How can I pass the sage Ulysses by? 270

Of ready wit, and dauntless courage, prov'd

In ev'ry danger; and to Pallas dear.

I should not fear, by him accompanied,

To pass through fire, and safely both return;

So far in prudence he surpasses all." 275

Whom answer'd thus Ulysses, ston'd of heart:

"Tydides, nor exaggerated praise

Bestow on me, nor censure; for thou speak'st

To those who know me all for what I am.

But go we; night wanes fast, the morn is near: 280

The stars are high in Heav'n; and of the night

Two thirds are spent, one third alone remains."

He said; and both prepar'd to don their arms.

The youthful warrior Thrasymedes gave

To Diomed a two-edg'd sword (his own 285

Had in the ship been left) and ample shield;

Then on his brows a leathern headpiece plac'd,

Without or peak or plume; a simple casque,

Such as is worn by youths to guard their head.

A bow, and well-fill'd quiver, and a sword, 290

Meriones to sage Ulysses gave;

And on his brows a leathern headpiece plac'd,

Well wrought within, with num'rous straps secur'd,

And on th' outside, with wild boars' gleaming tusks

Profusely garnish'd, scatter'd here and there 295

By skilful hand; the midst with felt was lin'd:

This from Amyntor, son of Ormenus,

Autolycus from Eleon bore away,

Spoil of his pillag'd house; Autolycus

Gave to Amphidamas, Cytheran chief, 300

Who in Scandea dwelt; Amphidamas

To Molus, pledge of friendship; he again

Gave to his son, Meriones, from whom

It now encircled sage Ulysses' brow.

Thus with accoutrements and arms supplied, 305

They left their brother chiefs, and took their way.

Then close beside their path, by Pallas sent,

Rose, on the right, a heron; through the gloom

They saw it not indeed, but heard the cry.

The fav'ring sign with joy Ulysses hail'd, 310

And thus to Pallas pray'd: "Hear me, thou child

Of ægis-bearing Jove, who still hast stood

In ev'ry peril at my side, whose eye

My ev'ry movement sees; now, Goddess, now

Befriend me; grant that safe, with triumph crown'd, 315

We may return, some great exploit achiev'd,

Such as the Trojans long may bear in mind."

Him following, thus the brave Tydides pray'd:

"My voice too, child of Jove, undaunted, hear;

And be with me, as with my father erst, 320

The godlike Tydeus, when to Thebes he went,

An envoy, in advance; and left behind,

Upon Asopus' banks the mail-clad Greeks.

Smooth was the message which to Thebes he bore;

But great, his mission ended, were the deeds 325

That with thine aid he wrought; for, Goddess, thou
Wast with him, and thine arm was his defence:
So be thou now with me, and me defend.

Then on thine altar will I sacrifice
A yearling heifer, broad of brow, untam'd, 330
Whereon no yoke hath mortal ever laid:
Her will I give, and tip her horns with gold."

Thus as they pray'd, their pray'r the Goddess heard;
Then, their devotions ended, on they far'd
Through the deep dead of night, like lions twain, 335
Mid slaughter, corpses, arms, and blacken'd gore.

Nor, in the Trojan camp, did Hector leave
The chiefs to rest; but all to conference call'd,
The leaders and the councillors of Troy;
To whom his prudent speech he thus address'd: 340
"Who is there here, that for a rich reward
A noble work will undertake? A car
And two strong-collar'd horses, best of all
That can be found within the Grecian lines,
Shall he receive, who, to his endless praise, 345
Shall dare approach the ships; and learn if still
They keep their wonted watch, or, by our arms

Subdued and vanquish'd, meditate retreat,
And, worn with toil, the nightly watch neglect."

Thus Hector spoke; but all in silence heard. 350

There was one Dolon in the Trojan camp,
The herald's son, Eumedes; rich in gold
And brass; not fair of face, but swift of foot;
Amid five sisters he the only son;

Who thus to Hector and the Trojans spoke: 355

"Hector, with dauntless courage I will dare
Approach the ships, and bring thee tidings sure;
But hold thou forth thy royal staff, and swear
That I the horses and the brass-bound car
Shall have, the boast of Peleus' matchless son: 360
Not vain shall be mine errand, nor deceive
Thy hopes; right through the camp I mean to pass
To Agamemnon's tent, where all the chiefs
Debate in council, or to fight or fly."

He said; and Hector took his royal staff, 365
And swore to him: "Be witness Jove himself,
The Lord of thunder, that no Trojan man,
Thyself except, shall e'er those horses drive;
For thee they are reserv'd, a glorious prize."

Thus Hector swore; though unfulfill'd the oath, 370
The hope to Dolon fresh assurance gave.
Forthwith, his bow across his shoulders slung,
A grisly wolfskin o'er it, on his head
A cap of marten's fur, and in his hand
A jav'lin, from the camp he took his way, 375
Straight to the Grecian ships; but never thence
Destin'd to bring th' expected tidings back.

The crowd of men and horses left behind,
Briskly he mov'd along; Ulysses first
Mark'd his approach, and to Tydides said: 380
"See, from the camp where some one this way comes,
With what intent I know not; if to play
The spy about the ships, or rob the dead.
Turn we aside, and let him pass us by
A little way; we then with sudden rush 385
May seize him; or if he outstrip us both
By speed of foot, may turn him tow'rd the ships,
Driving him still before us with our spears,
And from the city cutting off his flight."
Thus saying, 'mid the dead, beside the road 390
They crouch'd; he, all unconscious, hasten'd by.

But when such space was interpos'd as leave
Between the sluggish oxen and themselves*
A team of mules (so much the faster they
Through the stiff fallow drag the jointed plough), 395
They rush'd upon him; at the sound he stopp'd,
Deeming that from the Trojan camp they came,
By Hector sent, to order his return.
Within a spear's length when they came, or less,
For foes he knew them, and to flight address'd 400
His active limbs; they rush'd in hot pursuit.
And as two hounds, well practis'd in the chase,
With glist'ning fangs, unflagging, strain to catch,
In woodland glade, some pricket deer, or hare,
That flies before them, screaming; so those two, 405
Tydides and Ulysses, stout of heart,
With fiery zeal, unflagging, strain'd to catch
The flying Dolon, from the camp cut off;
But when the fugitive approach'd the ships,
Close by the guard, fresh vigour Pallas gave 410

* This comparison does not afford a very accurate criterion of the "space interposed;" which cannot be estimated without knowing the total distance within which the faster was to outstrip the slower team.

To Diomed, lest haply from the walls
Some other might anticipate his blow,
And he himself but second honours gain.
Tydides then with threat'ning gesture cried,
"Stop, or I hurl my spear; and small thy chance, 415
If I assail thee, of escape from death."
He said, and threw his spear; but by design
It struck him not; above his shoulder flew
The polish'd lance, and quiver'd in the ground.
Sudden he stopp'd, with panic paralys'd: 420
His teeth all chatt'ring, pale with fear he stood,
With falt'ring accents; panting, they came up
And seiz'd him in their grasp; he thus, in tears:
"Spare but my life; my life I can redeem;
For ample stores I have of gold, and brass, 425
And well-wrought iron; and of these my sire
Would pay a gen'rous ransom, could he learn
That in the Grecian ships I yet surviv'd."

To whom Ulysses, deep-designing, thus:
"Be of good cheer; nor let the fear of death 430
Disturb thy mind; but tell me truly this;
How is 't that tow'rd the ships thou com'st alone,

In the still night, when other mortals sleep?

Com'st thou perchance for plunder of the dead?

Or seek'st upon our ships to play the spy, 435

By Hector sent? or of thine own accord?"

Then Dolon thus—his knees with terror shook—

"With much persuasion, of my better mind

Hector beguil'd me, off'ring as my prize

Achilles' horses and his brass-bound car; 440

Through the dark night he sent me, and enjoind,

Ent'ring your hostile camp, to learn if still

Ye keep your wonted watch, or by our arms

Subdued and vanquish'd, meditate retreat,

And worn with toil, your nightly watch neglect." 445

To whom Ulysses thus with a smile:

"High soar'd thy hopes in vain, to win

The horses of Achilles; hard are they

For mortal man to harness or control

Save for Achilles' self, the Goddess-born. 450

But tell me truly this; when here thou cam'st,

Where left'st thou Hector, guardian chief of Troy?

Where are his warlike arms? his horses where?

Where lie the rest? and where are plac'd their guards?

What are their secret counsels? do they mean 455
Here by the ships to keep their ground, or back,
Sated with vict'ry, to the town return?"

Whom Dolon answer'd thus, Eumedes' son:

"Thy questions all true answers shall receive;
Hector, with those who share his counsels, sits 460
In conf'rence, far apart, near Ilus' tomb:
But for the guards thou speak'st of, noble chief,
Not one is station'd to protect the camp.
Around the Trojan fires indeed, perforce,
A watch is kept; and they, among themselves, 465
Due caution exercise: but, for th' Allies,
They sleep, and to the Trojans leave the watch,
Since nor their children nor their wives are near."

To whom Dolon answer'd thus, Ulysses thus:

"Say now, where are they? with the Trojans mix'd, 470
Or separate? explain, that I may know."

Whom answer'd Dolon thus, Eumedes' son:

"To this too will I give ye answer true;
Next to the sea the Carian forces lie;
The Pæon archers and the Leleges, 475
The Caucons, and the bold Pelasgians next;

On Thymbra's side the Lycians' lot has fall'n,
The Mysians brave, the Phrygian cavalry,
And the Mæonians with their horsehair plumes.
But why of these enquire? if ye intend 480
An inroad on the camp, apart from all,
New come, the farthest off, the Thracians lie:
Rhesus their King, the son of Eioneus,
Sleeps in the midst; no steeds that e'er I saw
For size and beauty can with his compare: 485
Whiter than snow, and swifter than the wind.
With gold and silver is his chariot wrought,
His armour golden, of gigantic size,
A marvel to behold! it seems not meet
For mortal man, but for th' immortal Gods. 490
But take me now in safety to the ships;
Or leave me here in fetters bound, that so,
Ere ye return, ye may approve my words,
And see if I have told you true, or no."

To whom thus Diomed with stern regard: 495
"Dolon, though good thy tidings, hope not thou,
Once in our hands, to 'scape the doom of death;
For if we now should let thee go, again

In after times thou mightst our ships approach,
As secret spy, or open enemy : 500
But if beneath my hands thou lose thy life,
No farther trouble shalt thou cause the Greeks."
He said; and as the suppliant sought in vain
To touch his beard, imploring, through his throat,
Both tendons sev'ring, drove his trenchant blade : 505
Ev'n while he spoke, his head was roll'd in dust.
The cap of marten fur from off his head
They took, the wolf-skin, and the bow unstrung,
And jav'lin; these Ulysses held aloft,
And thus to Pallas pray'd, who gave the spoil : 510
"Receive, great Goddess, these our gifts; to thee,
Of all th' Immortals on Olympus' height,
Our off'rings first we give; conduct us now,
The Thracian camp and Thracian steeds to gain."
Thus as he spoke, amid the tamarisk scrub 515
Far off he threw the trophies; then with reeds,
And twigs new broken from the tamarisk boughs,
He set a mark, lest in the gloom of night
Returning, they might haply miss the spot.
Then on they pass'd through arms and blacken'd gore, 520

And reach'd the confines of the Thracian camp.
There found they all by sleep subdued; their arms
Beside them on the ground, in order due,
In triple rows; and by the side of each,
Harness'd and yok'd, his horses ready stood. 525
Surrounded by his warriors, Rhesus slept;
Beside him stood his coursers fleet, their reins
Suspended to the chariot's topmost rail:
Ulysses mark'd him as he lay, and said,
"This is the man, Tydides, these the steeds, 530
To us by Dolon, whom we slew, describ'd.
Now then, put forth thy might; beseems it not
To stand thus idly with thine arms in hand:
Loose thou the horses; or do thou the men
Despatch, and to my care the horses leave." 535
He said: and Pallas vigour new inspir'd,
That right and left he smote; dire were the groans
Of slaughter'd men; the earth was red with blood;
And as a lion, on th' untended flock
Of sheep or goats with savage onslaught springs, 540
Ev'n so Tydides on the Thracians sprang,
Till twelve were slain; and as Tydides' sword

Gave each to death, Ulysses by the feet
Drew each aside; reflecting, that perchance
The horses, startled, might refuse to pass 545
The corpses; for as yet they knew them not.
But when Tydides saw the sleeping King,
A thirteenth victim to his sword was giv'n,
Painfully breathing; for by Pallas' art,
He saw that night, as in an evil dream, 550
The son of Æneus standing o'er his head.
Meanwhile Ulysses sage the horses loos'd;
He gather'd up the reins, and with his bow
(For whip was none at hand) he drove them forth;
Then softly whistling to Tydides gave 555
A signal; he, the while, remain'd behind,
Musing what bolder deed he yet might do;
Whether the seat, whereon the arms were laid,
To draw away, or, lifted high in air,
To bear it off in triumph on the car; 560
Or on the Thracians farther loss inflict;
But while he mus'd, beside him Pallas stood,
And said, "Bethink thee, Tydeus' son, betimes
Of thy return, lest, if some other God

Should wake the Trojans, thou shouldst need to fly." 565

She said ; the heav'nly voice he recogniz'd,
And mounted straight the car ; Ulysses touch'd
The horses with his bow ; and, urg'd to speed,
They tow'rd the ships their rapid course pursued.

Nor idle watch Apollo kept, who saw 570
Tydides o'er the plain by Pallas led ;
With anger fill'd, the Trojan camp he sought ;
And Rhesus' kinsman, good Hippocöon,
The Thracian councillor, from sleep arous'd ;
Awaking, when the vacant space he view'd, 575
Where late had stood the horses ; and his friends
Gasping in death, and welt'ring in their blood,
He groan'd as on his comrade's name he call'd ;
Then loud the clamour rose, and wild uproar,
Unspeakable, of Trojans thronging round ; 580
They marvell'd at the deeds ; but marvell'd more
How they who wrought them had escap'd unscath'd.

Meantime arriv'd where Hector's scout they slew,
Ulysses, lov'd of Heav'n, a moment check'd
His eager steeds ; Tydides from the car 585
Leap'd to the ground, and in Ulysses' hand

The bloody trophies plac'd; then mounted quick,
And tow'rd the ships, their destin'd goal, urg'd on
The fiery horses; nothing loth, they flew.
Nestor first heard the sound, and cried, "O friends, 590
The leaders and the councillors of Greece,
Am I deceiv'd, or is it true? methinks
The sound of horses, hurrying, strikes mine ear;
Grant Heav'n, Ulysses and brave Diomed
May bring those horses from the Trojan camp; 595
Yet much I fear our bravest may have met
With some disaster 'mid the crowd of foes."

He scarce had ended, when themselves appear'd,
And from the car descended: welcom'd back
With cordial grasp of hands, and friendly words. 600
Gerenian Nestor first, enquiring, said:
"Tell me, renown'd Ulysses, pride of Greece,
Whence come these horses? from the Trojan camp?
Or hath some God, that met you by the way,
Bestow'd them, radiant as the beams of light? 605
Among the Trojans day by day I move;
'Tis not my wont, old warrior though I be,
To lag behind; but horses such as these

I never saw; some God hath giv'n them, sure;
For Jove, the Cloud-compeller, loves you both, 610
And Pallas, child of ægis-bearing Jove."

To whom again the sage Ulysses thus:
"O Nestor, son of Neleus, pride of Greece,
Had they so will'd, the Gods, so great their pow'r,
Ev'n better horses could have giv'n than these; 615
But these, old man, are Thracians, newly come;
Whose King the valiant Diomed hath slain,
And with him twelve, the best of all his band.
A scout too have we slain, by Hector sent,
And by the Trojan chiefs, to spy our camp." 620

He said, and o'er the ditch the horses drove,
Exulting in their prize; and with him went
The other chiefs, rejoicing, through the camp.
Arriv'd at Diomed's well-order'd tent,
First with strong halters to the rack, where stood, 625
High-fed with corn, his own swift-footed steeds,
The horses they secur'd; Ulysses then
The bloody spoils of Dolon stow'd away
In the ship's stern, till fitting sacrifice
To Pallas might be offer'd; to the sea 630

Descending then, they wash'd away the sweat,
Which on their necks, and thighs, and knees had dried;
The sweat wash'd off, and in the ocean waves
Themselves refresh'd, they sought the polish'd bath;
Then, by the bath restor'd, and all their limbs 635
Anointed freely with the lissom oil,
Sat down to breakfast; and from flowing bowls
In Pallas' honour pour'd the luscious wine. 638

BOOK XI.

NOW rose Aurora from Tithonus' bed,
To mortals and Immortals bringing light;
When to the ships of Greece came Discord down,
Despatch'd from Jove, with dire portents of war.
Upon Ulysses' lofty ship she stood, 5
The midmost, thence to shout to either side,
Or to the tents of Ajax Telamon,
Or of Achilles, who at each extreme,
Confiding in their strength, had moor'd their ships.
There stood the Goddess, and in accents loud 10
And dread she call'd, and fix'd in ev'ry breast
The fierce resolve to wage unwearied war;
And dearer to their hearts than thoughts of home
Or wish'd return, became the battle-field.
Atrides, loudly shouting, call'd the Greeks 15
To arms: himself his flashing armour donn'd.
First on his legs the well-wrought greaves he fix'd,

Fasten'd with silver clasps; his ample chest
A breastplate guarded, giv'n by Cinyras
In pledge of friendship; for in Cyprus' isle 20
He heard the rumour of the glorious fleet
About to sail for Troy; and sought with gifts
To win the favour of the mighty King.
Ten bands were there inwrought of dusky bronze,
Twelve of pure gold, twice ten of shining tin: 25
Of bronze six dragons upwards tow'rd the neck
Their length extended, three on either side:
In colour like the bow, which Saturn's son
Plac'd in the clouds, a sign to mortal men:
Then o'er his shoulder threw his sword; bright flash'd 30
The golden studs; the silver scabbard shone,
With golden baldrick fitted; next his shield
He took, full-siz'd, well-wrought, well-prov'd in fight;
Around it ran ten circling rims of brass;
With twenty bosses round of burnish'd tin, 35
And, in the centre, one of dusky bronze.
A Gorgon's head, with aspect terrible,
Was wrought, with Fear and Flight encircled round:
Depending from a silver belt it hung;

And on the belt a dragon, wrought in bronze, 40
Twin'd his lithe folds, and turn'd on ev'ry side,
Sprung from a single neck, his triple head.
Then on his brow his lofty helm he plac'd,
Four-crested, double-peak'd, with horsehair plumes,
That nodded, fearful, from the warrior's head. 45
Then took two weighty lances, tipp'd with brass,
Which fiercely flash'd against the face of Heav'n:
Pallas and Juno thund'ring from on high
In honour of Mycenæ's wealthy lord.

Forthwith they order'd, each his charioteer, 50
To stay his car beside the ditch; themselves,
On foot, in arms accoutred, sallied forth,
And loud, ere early dawn, the clamour rose.
Advanc'd before the cars, they lin'd the ditch;
Follow'd the cars, a little space between: 55
But Jove with dire confusion fill'd their ranks,
Who sent from Heav'n a show'r of blood-stain'd rain,
In sign of many a warrior's coming doom,
Soon to the viewless shades untimely sent.
Meanwhile upon the slope, beneath the plain, 60
The Trojan chiefs were gather'd; Hector's self,

Polydamas, Æneas, as a God

In rev'rence held; Antenor's three brave sons,

Agenor's godlike presence, Polybus,

And, heav'nly fair, the youthful Acamas. 65

In front was seen the broad circumference

Of Hector's shield; and as amid the clouds

Shines forth the fiery dog-star, bright and clear,

Anon beneath the cloudy veil conceal'd;

So now in front was Hector seen, and 'now 70

Pass'd to the rear, exhorting; all in brass,

His burnish'd arms like Jove's own lightning flash'd.

As in the corn-land of some wealthy Lord

The rival bands of reapers mow the swathe,

Barley or wheat; and fast the trusses fall; 75

So Greeks and Trojans mow'd th' opposing ranks;

Nor these admitted thought of faint retreat,

But still made even head; while those, like wolves,

Rush'd to the onset; Discord, Goddess dire,

Beheld, rejoicing; of the heav'nly pow'rs 80

She only mingled with the combatants;

The others all were absent; they, serene,

Repos'd in gorgeous palaces, for each

Amid Olympus' deep recesses built.

Yet all the cloud-girt son of Saturn blam'd, 85

Who will'd the vict'ry to the arms of Troy.

He heeded not their anger; but withdrawn

Apart from all, in pride of conscious strength,

Survey'd the walls of Troy, the ships of Greece,

The flash of arms, the slayers and the slain. 90

While yet 'twas morn, and wax'd the youthful day,

Thick flew the shafts, and fast the people fell

On either side; but when the hour was come

When woodmen, in the forest's deep recess,

Prepare their food, and wearied with the toil 95

Of felling loftiest trees, with aching arms

Turn with keen relish to their midday meal;

Then Grecian valour broke th' opposing ranks,

As each along the line encourag'd each;

First sprang the monarch Agamemnon forth, 100

And brave Bienor slew, his people's guard;

And, with the chief, his friend and charioteer,

Oileus; he, down-leaping from the car,

Stood forth defiant; but between his brows

The monarch's spear was thrust; nor aught avail'd 105

The brass-bound helm to stay the weapon's point;
Through helm and bone it pass'd, and all the brain
Was shatter'd; forward as he rush'd, he fell.
Them left he there, their bare breasts gleaming white,
Stripp'd of their arms; and hasten'd in pursuit 110
Of Antiphus and Isus, Priam's sons,
A bastard one, and one legitimate,
Both on one car; the bastard held the reins:
Beside him stood the gallant Antiphus.
Them, as they fed their flocks on Ida's heights, 115
Achilles once had captive made, and bound
With willow saplings, till for ransom freed.
The mighty monarch, Agamemnon, drove
Through Isus' breast his spear; his weighty sword
Descended on the head of Antiphus 120
Beside the ear, and hurl'd him from his car;
These of their armour he despoil'd in haste,
Known to him both; for he had seen them oft
Beside the ships, when thither captive brought
From Ida by Achilles, swift of foot. 125
As when a lion in their lair hath seiz'd
The helpless offspring of a mountain doe,

And breaks their bones with ease, and with strong teeth
Crushes their tender life; nor can their dam,
Though close at hand she be, avail them aught; 130
For she herself by deadly terror seiz'd,
Through the thick coppice and the forest flies,
Panting, and bath'd in sweat, the monster's rush;
So dar'd no Trojan give those brethren aid,
Themselves in terror of the warlike Greeks. 135
Peisander next, and bold Hippolochus,
Sons of Antimachus ('twas he who chief,
Seduc'd by Paris' gold and splendid gifts,
Advis'd the restitution to refuse
Of Helen to her Lord), the King assail'd; 140
Both on one car; but from their hands had dropp'd
The broider'd reins; bewilder'd there they stood;
While, with a lion's bound, upon them sprang
The son of Atreus; suppliant, in the car,
They clasp'd his knees; "Give quarter, Atreus' son, 145
Redeem our lives; our sire Antimachus
Possesses goodly store of brass and gold,
And well-wrought iron; and of these he fain
Would pay a noble ransom, could he hear

That in the Grecian ships we yet surviv'd." 150

Thus they, with gentle words, and tears, imploring;
But all ungentle was the voice they heard
In answer; "If indeed ye be the sons
Of that Antimachus, who counsel gave,
When noble Meneläus came to Troy 155

With sage Ulysses, as ambassadors,
To slay them both, nor suffer their return,
Pay now the forfeit of your father's guilt."
He said, and with a spear-thrust through his breast
Peisander dash'd to earth; backward he fell. 160

Down leap'd Antilochus; but with his sword
Atrides sever'd both his hands and neck,
And in the dust, a headless block, he roll'd.
These left he there; and where the thickest throng
Maintain'd the tug of war, thither he flew, 165

And with him eager hosts of well-greav'd Greeks.
Soon on the Trojans' flight enforc'd they hung,
Destroying; foot on foot, and horse on horse;
While from the plain thick clouds of dust arose
Beneath the arm'd hoofs of clatt'ring steeds; 170
And on the monarch Agamemnon press'd,

Still slaying, urging still the Greeks to arms.
As when amid a densely timber'd wood
Light the devouring flames, by eddying winds
Hither and thither borne, fast falls the copse 175
Prostrate beneath the fire's impetuous course;
So thickly fell the flying Trojans' heads
Beneath the might of Agamemnon's arm;
And here and there, athwart the pass of war,
Was many an empty car at random whirl'd 180
By strong-neck'd steeds, of guiding hands bereft;
Stretch'd on the plain they lay, more welcome sight
To carrion birds than to their widow'd wives.
But Hector, from the fray and din of war,
And dust, and blood, and carnage, Jove withdrew. 185
Still on Atrides press'd, the Greek pursuit
With eager shouts exciting; past the tomb
Of Ius, ancient son of Dardanus,
And tow'rd the fig-tree, midway o'er the plain,
Straining to gain the town, the Trojans fled; 190
While loudly shouting, his unconquer'd hands
With carnage dyed, Atrides urg'd their flight.
But when the Scæan gates and oak were reach'd,

They made a stand, and fac'd the foe's assault.
Some o'er the open plain were yet dispers'd; 195
As heifers, by a lion scatter'd wide,
At dead of night; all fly; on one descends
The doom of death; her with his pow'rful teeth
He seizes, and, her neck first broken, rends,
And on her entrails gorging, laps her blood. 200
So these the monarch Agamemnon chas'd,
Slaying the hindmost; they in terror fled:
Some headlong, backward some, Atrides' hand
Hurl'd from their chariot many a warrior bold;
So forward and so fierce he bore his spear. 205
But as he near'd the city, and stood beneath
The lofty wall, the Sire of Gods and men
From Heav'n descended; on the topmost height
Of Ida's spring-abounding hill he sat;
And while his hand the lightning grasp'd, he thus 210
To golden-wingèd Iris gave command:
"Haste thee, swift Iris, and to Hector bear
From me this message; bid him, that as long
As Agamemnon in the van appears,
Raging, and dealing death among the ranks, 215

He from the battle keep himself aloof,
But urge the rest undaunted to maintain
The stubborn fight; but should Atrides, struck
By spear or arrow, to his car withdraw,
He shall from me receive such pow'r to slay, 220
As to the ships shall bear him, ere the sun
Decline, and Darkness spread her hallowing shade."

Thus he; to Troy, obedient to his word,
From Ida's heights swift-footed Iris sped:
Amid the horses and the well-fram'd cars 225
The godlike Hector, Priam's son, she found,
And stood beside him, and address'd him thus:

"Hector, thou son of Priam, sage as Jove
In council, he the Universal Lord
Sends thee by me this message; that as long 230
As Agamemnon in the van appears,
Raging, and dealing death amid the ranks,
Thou from the battle keep thyself aloof,
But urge the rest undaunted to maintain
The stubborn fight; but should Atrides, struck 235
By spear or arrow, to his car withdraw,
Thou shalt from him receive such pow'r to slay

As to the ships shall bear thee, ere the sun
Decline, and Darkness spread her hallowing shade."

Swift-footed Iris said, and disappear'd; 240

But from his chariot Hector leap'd to earth,
Hither and thither passing through the ranks,
With brandish'd jav'lins urging to the fight.
Loud, at his bidding, rose the battle-cry;
Back roll'd the tide; again they fac'd the Greeks: 245
On th' other side the Greeks their masses form'd,
In line of battle rang'd; oppos'd they stood;
And in the front, to none content to cede
The foremost place, was Agamemnon seen.

Say now, ye Nine, who on Olympus dwell, 250
Of all the Trojans and their fam'd Allies,
Who first oppos'd to Agamemnon stood.
Iphidamas, Antenor's gallant son,
Stalwart and brave; in fertile Thracia bred,
Mother of flocks; him, in his infant years, 255
His grandsire Cisseus, fair Theano's sire,
In his own palace rear'd; and when he reach'd
The perfect measure of his glorious youth,
Still in his house retain'd him, and to wife

Gave him his daughter; from the marriage straight 260
He, with twelve beaked ships that own'd his sway,
Set forth to join the glory of the Greeks.
His well-trimm'd ships upon Percote's shore
He left; and came himself on foot to Troy;
Who now confronted Atreus' godlike son. 265

When near they drew, Atrides miss'd his aim,
His spear diverging; then Iphidamas
Beneath the breastplate, striking on his belt,
Strove with strong hand to drive the weapon home;
Yet could not pierce the belt's close-plaited work; 270
The point, encounter'd by the silver fold,
Was bent, like lead; then with his pow'ful hand
The monarch Agamemnon seiz'd the spear,
And tow'rd him drew, and with a lion's strength
Wrench'd from his foeman's grasp; then on his neck 275
Let fall his sword, and slack'd his limbs in death.
There, falling in his country's cause, he slept
The iron sleep of death; unhappy he,
Far from his virgin-bride, yet unpossess'd,
Though bought with costly presents; first he gave 280
A hundred steers; and promis'd thousands more

Of sheep and goats from out his countless flocks.
Him Agamemnon of his arms despoil'd,
And to the crowd of Greeks the trophies bore.
But when Antenor's eldest-born beheld, 285
Cöon, th' observ'd of all men, bitt'rest grief
His eyes o'ershadow'd, for his brother's fate;
And, unperceiv'd by Atreus' godlike son,
Standing aside, he struck him with his spear,
Through the mid arm, beneath the elbow's bend; 290
And drove right through the weapon's glitt'ring point.
Writh'd with the pain the mighty King of men;
Yet from the combat flinch'd he not, nor quail'd:
But grasping firm his weather-toughen'd spear
On Cöon rush'd, as by the feet he drew 295
His father's son, Iphidamas, away,
Invoking all the bravest to his aid;
And as he drew the body tow'rd the crowd,
Beneath the bossy shield the monarch thrust
His brass-clad spear, and slack'd his limbs in death; 300
Then near approaching, ev'n upon the corpse
Of dead Iphidamas, struck off his head:
So by Atrides' hand, Antenor's sons,

Their doom accomplish'd, to the shades were sent.
Then through the crowded ranks, with spear and sword, 305
And massive stones, he held his furious course,
While the hot blood was welling from his arm;
But when the wound was dry, and stanch'd the blood,
Keen anguish then Atrides' might subdued.
As when a woman in her labour-throes 310
Sharp pangs encompass, by Lucina sent,
Who rules o'er child-birth travail, ev'n so keen
The pangs that then Atrides' might subdued.
Mounting his car he bade his charioteer
Drive to the ships; for sore his spirit was pain'd; 315
But loud and clear he shouted to the Greeks:
"O friends, the chiefs and councillors of Greece,
Yours be it now our sea-borne ships to guard:
Since Jove, the Lord of counsel, through the day
Wills not that I the battle should maintain." 320
He said: and swiftly to the ships were driv'n
His sleek-skinn'd coursers; nothing loth they flew;
With foam their chests were fleck'd, with dust their flanks,
As from the field their wounded Lord they bore:
But Hector, as he saw the King retire, 325

To Trojans and to Lycians call'd aloud:

“Trojans and Lycians, and ye Dardans fam'd
In close encounter, quit ye now like men;
Put forth your wonted valour; from the field
Their bravest has withdrawn, and Jove on me 330
Great glory hath shed; now headlong on the Greeks
Urge your swift steeds, and endless honour gain.”

His words fresh courage rous'd in ev'ry breast:
And as a hunter cheers his sharp-fang'd hounds
On forest boar or lion; on the Greeks 335
So cheer'd the valiant Trojans Priam's son,
Illustrious Hector, stern as blood-stain'd Mars.
Bent on high deeds, himself in front advanc'd,
Fell on the masses as a whirlwind falls,
Lashing with furious sweep the dark-blue sea. 340

Say then, who first, who last, by Hector's hand,
Whom Jove had will'd to crown with honour, died.
Assæus first, and then Autonöus,
Opites, and Opheltius, Dolops, son
Of Clytus, and Æsumnus, Agelas 345
And Orus, and the brave Hipponöus;
All these the chiefs of Greece; the nameless crowd

He scatter'd next; as when the west wind drives
The clouds, and battles with the hurricane,
Before the clearing blast of Notus driv'n; 350
The big waves heave and roll, and high aloft
The gale, careering, flings the ocean spray;
So thick and furious fell on hostile heads
The might of Hector. Now had fearful deeds
Been done, and Greeks beside their ships had fall'n 355
In shameful rout, had not Ulysses thus
To Diomed, the son of Tydeus, call'd:

“Why, son of Tydeus, should we thus relax
Our warlike courage? come, stand by me now,
True friend! if Hector of the glancing helm 360
Our ships should capture, great were our disgrace.”

Whom answer'd thus the valiant Diomed:
“Beside thee will I stand, and still endure;
But brief will be the term of our success,
Since Jove, the Cloud-compeller, not to us, 365
But to the Trojans, wills the victory.”

He said, and from his car Thymbræus hurl'd,
Through the left breast transfix'd: Ulysses' hand
His charioteer, the brave Molion, slew.

These left they there, no more to share the fight; 370

Then turning, spread confusion 'mid the crowd:

As turn two boars upon the hunter's pack

With desp'rate courage, turning so to bay,

Those two, the Trojans scatt'ring, gave the Greeks,

From Hector flying, time again to breathe. 375

A car they seiz'd which bore two valiant chiefs,

Sons of Percotian Merops; he, o'er all

In lore prophetic skill'd, would fain at home

Have kept them from the life-destroying war:

But they, by adverse fate impell'd to seek 380

Their doom of death, his warning voice despis'd.

These two, of strength and life at once bereft,

The son of Tydeus, valiant Diomed,

Stripp'd of their armour; while Ulysses slew

Hippodamus, and bold Hyperochus. 385

Thus Jove, from Ida's height beholding, held

His even scale, each party slaught'ring each.

Then with his spear Tydides through the loins

Agastrophus, the son of Pæon, smote;

No car had he at hand, whereto to fly: 390

But, ill-advis'd, had in th' attendants' charge

His horses left far off; while he himself
Rush'd 'mid the throng on foot, and met his doom.
Hector's quick glance athwart the files beheld,
And to the rescue, with a shout, he sprang, 395
The Trojan columns following; not unmov'd
The valiant Diomed his coming saw,
And thus bespoke Ulysses at his side:
"On us this plague, this mighty Hector, falls:
Yet stand we firm, and boldly meet the shock." 400
He said, and, poising, hurl'd his pond'rous spear,
And not in vain; on Hector's head it struck
His helmet's crest, but, brass encount'ring brass,
Himself it reach'd not; for the visor'd helm,
Apollo's gift, three-plated, stay'd its force. 405
Yet backward Hector sprang amid the crowd,
And on his knees he dropp'd, his stalwart hand
Propp'd on the ground; while darkness veil'd his eyes.
But ere Tydides, following up his spear,
Attain'd from far the spot whereon he fell, 410
Hector reviv'd, and mounting quick his car,
Drove 'mid the crowd, and 'scap'd the doom of death.
Then thus, with threat'ning spear, Tydides cried:

“ Yet once again, vile hound, hast thou escap'd;
Thy doom was nigh; but thee thy God hath sav'd, 415
Phœbus, to whom, amid the clash of spears,
Well mayst thou pray! We yet shall meet again;
When I shall end thee, if a guardian God
I too may claim; meanwhile from thee I turn,
And others seek on whom my hap may light.” 420

He said, and turn'd him of his arms to strip
The son of Pæon; but beside the stone
That mark'd where men of old had rais'd a mound
To Ilus, Dardan's son, the ancient chief,
There crouching, Paris, fair-hair'd Helen's Lord, 425
Against the son of Tydeus bent his bow.
He from the breast of brave Agastrophus
Had stripp'd the corslet; from his shoulders broad
The buckler, and the helmet from his head,
When Paris bent his bow, and not in vain 430
His arrow launch'd; Tydides' dexter foot
Right through it pierc'd, and pinn'd it to the ground.
Joyous he laugh'd, and from his hiding place
Sprang forth, and thus in tones of triumph cried:

“ Thou hast it! not in vain my shaft hath flown! 435

Would that, deep buried in thy flank, it touch'd
Thy very life ! so should our Trojans lose
Their panic fear, who now on thee with dread,
As bleating goats upon a lion, look."

To whom, unmov'd, the valiant Diomed : 440
" Poor archer, trusting to thy bow alone,
Vile sland'rer and seducer ! if indeed
Thou durst in arms oppos'd to me to stand,
Nought would avail thy arrows and thy bow :
And now, because thy shaft hath graz'd my foot, 445
Thou mak'st thine empty boast : I heed thee not,
More than a woman or a puny child :
A worthless coward's weapon hath no point.
'Tis diff'rent far with me ! though light it fall,
My spear is sharp, and whom it strikes, it slays. 450
His widow's cheeks are mark'd with scars of grief,
His children orphans ; rotting on the ground,
Red with his blood, he lies, his fun'ral rites
By carrion birds, and not by women paid."

Thus while he spoke, Ulysses, spearman bold, 455
Drew near, and stood before him ; he, behind,
Sat down protected, and from out his foot

The arrow drew ; whereat sharp anguish shot
Through all his flesh ; and mounting on his car
He bade his faithful charioteer in haste 460
Drive to the ships, for pain weigh'd down his soul.
Alone Ulysses stood ; of all the Greeks
Not one beside him ; all were panic-struck :
Then with his spirit, perturb'd, he commun'd thus :
“ Me miserable ! which way shall I choose ? 465
Great were the mischief, should I fly, and so
Increase the people's terror ; yet 'twere worse
Here to be caught alone ; and Saturn's son
With panic fear the other Greeks hath fill'd.
Yet why, my soul, admit such thoughts as these ? 470
I know that cowards from the battle fly ;
But he who boasts a warrior's name, must learn,
Wounded or wounding, firmly still to stand.”

While in his mind and spirit thus he mus'd,
Onward the buckler'd ranks of Trojans came, 475
And, to their harm, encircled him around.
As when a boar, by dogs and stalwart youths
Attack'd, the sheltring thicket leaves, and whets
The tusks that gleam between his curv'd jaws ;

They crowd around, though ring his clatt'ring tusks, 480
And, fearful though it be, await his rush:
So crowded round Ulysses, dear to Jove,
The Trojans; he, with brandish'd spear aloft,
Sprang forth, and through the shoulder, from above,
Deiöpites wounded: Thöon next 485
He slew, and Ennomus; then with his spear
Chersidamas, in act to quit his car,
Thrust through the loins below his bossy shield:
Prone in the dust, he clutch'd the blood-stain'd soil.
From these he turn'd; and wounded with his spear 490
Charops, the high-born Socus' brother, son
Of Hippasus; then forward sprang, to aid
His brother, godlike Socus; close he stood
Before Ulysses, and address'd him thus:
"Far-fam'd Ulysses, as in arms, in wiles 495
Unwearied, thou this day o'er both the sons
Of Hippasus, two mighty warriors slain,
And of their armour spoil'd, shalt make thy boast,
Or by my spear thyself shalt lose thy life."
He said, and on the shield's broad circle struck: 500
Through the bright shield the sturdy weapon drove,

And through the rich-wrought baldrick, from the ribs
Tearing the flesh away; but Pallas seiz'd,
And turn'd it from the vital parts aside.
The wound, Ulysses knew, was not to death, 505
And back he drew, and thus to Socus cried:

“Ill-fated thou! thy doom hath found thee now!
Me hast thou hinder'd from the war awhile;
But thee to swift destruction and dark death
This day I doom: great glory, of thee subdued, 510
Shall I obtain, and Hades take thy soul.”

Thus he: and Socus, turning, sought to fly;
But as he turn'd him round, Ulysses' spear
Behind his neck, between the shoulder blades
Was driv'n, and through his chest; thund'ring he fell, 515
And o'er his fall Ulysses, vaunting, thus:

“Socus, thou son of warlike Hippasus,
Here hast thou found, nor couldst escape, thy doom.
Ill-fated thou! nor sire's nor mother's hand
Shall gather up thy bones, but carrion birds 520
O'er thee shall flap their baleful wings, and tear
Thy mangled flesh; for me, whene'er I die
The sons of Greece will build my fun'ral pile.”

From out his flesh, and from his bossy shield,
The spear of Socus, as he spoke, he drew ; 525
And as he drew it forth, out gush'd his blood,
With anguish keen. The Trojans, when they saw
Ulysses' blood, with clam'rous shouts advanc'd
Promiscuous ; he, retiring, shouted loud
To call his comrades ; loud as head of man 530
Could bear, he shouted thrice ; and thrice his shout
The warlike Meneläus heard, and thus
To Ajax, standing by his side, he spoke :
 " Ajax, thou Heav'n-born son of Telamou,
Great chief of men, methinks I hear the voice 535
Of stout Ulysses, as though left alone,
And in the stubborn fight cut off from aid,
By Trojans over-master'd. Haste we then,
For so 'twere best, to give him present aid.
Brave though he be, yet left alone, I fear 540
Great cause we Greeks may have to mourn his loss."
He spoke, and led the way ; the godlike chief
Follow'd his steps : Ulysses, dear to Jove,
Surrounded by the Trojan host they found,
As hungry jackals on the mountain side 545

Around a stag, that from an archer's hand
Hath taken hurt, yet while his blood was warm
And limbs yet serv'd, has baffled his pursuit;
But when the fatal shaft has drain'd his strength,
Thirsting for blood, beneath the forest shade, 550
The jackals seize their victim; then if chance
A hungry lion pass, the jackals shrink
In terror back, while he devours the prey;
So round Ulysses, sage in council, press'd
The Trojans, many and brave, yet nobly he 555
Averted, spear in hand, the fatal hour;
Till, with his tow'r-like shield before him borne,
Appear'd great Ajax, and beside him stood.
Hither and thither then the Trojans fled;
While with supporting arm from out the crowd 560
The warlike Menelæus led him forth,
Till his attendant with his car drew near.
Then Ajax, on the Trojans springing, slew
Doryclus, royal Priam's bastard son;
Next Pyrasus he smote, and Pandocus, 565
Lysander, and Pylartes; as a stream,
Swoll'n by the rains of Heav'n, that from the hills

Pours down its wintry torrent on the plain ;
And many a blighted oak, and many a pine
It bears, with piles of drift-wood, to the sea : 570
So swept illustrious Ajax o'er the plain,
O'erthrowing men and horses ; though unknown
To Hector ; he, upon Scamander's banks
Was warring on the field's extremest left,
Where round great Nestor and the warlike King 575
Idomeneus, while men were falling fast,
Rose, irrepressible, the battle cry.
Hector, 'mid these, was working wondrous deeds,
With spear and car, routing th' opposèd youth ;
Yet had the Greeks ev'n so their ground maintain'd, 580
But godlike Paris, fair-hair'd Helen's Lord,
Through the right shoulder, with a three-barb'd shaft,
As in the front he fought, Machaon quell'd :
For him the warrior Greeks were sore afraid,
Lest he, as back the line of battle roll'd, 585
Might to the foe be left ; to Nestor then
Idomeneus address'd his speech, and said :
“ O Nestor, son of Neleus, pride of Greece,
Haste thee to mount thy car, and with thee take

Machaon; tow'rd the vessels urge with speed 590
Thy flying steeds; worth many a life is his,
The skilful leech, who knows, with practis'd hand,
T' extract the shaft, and healing drugs apply."

He said: Gerenian Nestor at the word
Mounted his car, Machaon at his side, 595
The skilful leech, sage Æsculapius' son:
He touch'd his horses; tow'rd the Grecian ships,
As was his purpose, nothing loth, they flew.

To Hector then Cebriones, who saw
Confus'd the Trojans' right, drew near, and said: 600
"Hector, we here, on th' outskirts of the field,
O'erpow'r the Greeks; on th' other side, our friends
In strange confusion mingled, horse and man,
Are driv'n; among them Ajax spreads dismay,
The son of Telamon; I know him well, 605
And the broad shield that o'er his shoulders hangs;
Thither direct we then our car, where most
In mutual slaughter horse and foot engage,
And loudest swells, uncheck'd, the battle cry."

He said, and with the pliant lash he touch'd 610
The sleek-skin'd horses; springing at the sound,

Between the Greeks and Trojans, light they bore
The flying car, o'er corpses of the slain
And broken bucklers trampling; all beneath
Was plash'd with blood the axle, and the rails 615
Around the car, as from the horses' feet,
And from the felloes of the wheels, were thrown
The bloody gouts; yet on he sped, to join
The strife of men, and break th' opposing ranks.
His coming spread confusion 'mid the Greeks, 620
His spear awhile withheld; then through the rest,
With sword, and spear, and pond'rous stones he rush'd,
But shunn'd the might of Ajax Telamon.

But Jove, high thron'd, the soul of Ajax fill'd
With fear; aghast he stood; his sev'nfold shield 625
He threw behind his back, and, trembling, gaz'd
Upon the crowd; then, like some beast of prey,
Foot slowly following foot, reluctant turn'd.
As when the rustic youths and dogs have driv'n
A tawny lion from the cattle fold, 630
Watching all night, and baulk'd him of his prey;
Rav'ning for flesh, he still th' attempt renews,
But still in vain: for many a jav'lin, hurl'd

By vig'rous arms, confronts him to his face,
And blazing faggots, that his courage daunt; 635
Till, with the dawn, reluctant he retreat:
So from before the Trojans Ajax turn'd,
Reluctant, fearing for the ships of Greece.
As near a field of corn, a stubborn ass,
Upon whose sides had many a club been broke, 640
O'erpow'rs his boyish guides, and ent'ring in,
On the rich forage grazes; while the boys
Their cudgels ply, but vain their puny strength,
Yet drive him out, when fully fed, with ease:
Ev'n so great Ajax, son of Telamon, 645
The valiant Trojans and their fam'd Allies,
Still thrusting at his shield, before them drove:
Yet would he sometimes, rallying, hold in check
The Trojan host; then turn again to flight,
Yet barring still the passage to the ships. 650
Midway between the Trojans and the Greeks
He stood defiant; many jav'lins, hurl'd
By vig'rous arms, were in their flight receiv'd
On his broad shield; and many, ere they reach'd
Their living mark, fell midway on the plain, 655

Fix'd in the ground, in vain athirst for blood.

Him thus, hard press'd by thick-thrown spears, beheld
Eurypylus, Euæmon's noble son.

He hasten'd up, and aim'd his glitt'ring spear;

And Apisaon, Phausias' noble son, 660

Below the midriff through the liver struck,

And straight relax'd in sudden death his limbs.

Forth sprang Eurypylus to seize the spoils:

But godlike Paris saw, and as he stoop'd

From Apisaon's corpse to strip his arms, 665

Against Eurypylus he bent his bow,

And his right thigh transfix'd; the injur'd limb

Disabling, in the wound the arrow broke.

He 'mid his friends, escaping death, withdrew,

And to the Greeks with piercing shout he call'd: 670

“O friends, the chiefs and councillors of Greece,

Turn yet again, and from the doom of death

Great Ajax save, hard press'd by hostile spears:

Scarce can I hope he may escape with life

The desp'rate fight; yet bravely stand, and aid 675

The mighty Ajax, son of Telamon.”

Thus spoke the wounded hero: round him they

With sloping shields and spears uplifted stood :
Ajax to meet them came ; and when he reach'd
The friendly ranks, again he turn'd to bay. 680
So rag'd, like blazing fire, the furious fight.

Meanwhile the mares of Neleus, drench'd with sweat,
Bore Nestor and Machaon from the field ;
Achilles saw, and mark'd them where he stood
Upon his lofty vessel's prow, and watch'd 685
The grievous toil, the lamentable rout.
Then on his friend Patroclus from the ship
He call'd aloud ; he heard his voice, and forth,
As Mars majestic, from the tent he came :
(That day commenc'd his evil destiny) 690
And thus Menoetius' noble son began :

“ Why call'st thou me ? what wouldst thou, Peleus' son ? ”
To whom Achilles, swift of foot, replied :
“ Son of Menoetius, dearest to my soul,
Soon must the suppliant Greeks before me kneel, 695
So insupportable is now their need.
But haste thee now, Patroclus, dear to Jove :
Enquire of Nestor, from the battle field
Whom brings he wounded ; looking from behind

Most like he seem'd to Æsculapius' son, 700
Machaon: but his face I could not see,
So swiftly past the eager horses flew."

He said: obedient to his friend's command,
Quick to the tents and ships Patroclus ran.

They, when they reach'd the tent of Neleus' son, 705
Descended to the ground; Eurymedon
The old man's mares unharness'd from the car,
While on the beach they fac'd the cooling breeze,
Which from their garments dried the sweat; then turn'd,
And in the tent on easy seats repos'd. 710

For them the fair-hair'd Hecamede mix'd
A cordial potion; her from Tenelos,
When by Achilles ta'en, the old man brought;
Daughter of great Arsinöus, whom the Greeks
On him, their sagest councillor, bestow'd. 715

Before them first a table fair she spread,
Well polish'd, and with feet of solid bronze;
On this a brazen canister she plac'd,
And onions, as a relish to the wine,
And pale clear honey, and pure barley meal: 720
By these a splendid goblet, which from home

Th' old man had brought, with golden studs adorn'd:

Four were its handles, and round each two doves

Appear'd to feed; at either end, a cup.

Scarce might another move it from the board, 725

When full; but aged Nestor rais'd with ease.

In this, their goddess-like attendant first

A gen'rous measure mix'd of Pramnian wine:

Then with a brazen grater shredded o'er

The goatsmilk cheese, and whitest barley meal, 730

And of the draught compounded bade them drink.

They drank, and then, reliev'd the parching thirst,

With mutual converse entertain'd the hour.

Before the gate divine Patroclus stood:

The old man saw, and from his seat arose. 735

And took him by the hand, and led him in,

And bade him sit; but he, refusing, said:

“No seat for me, thou venerable sire!

I must not stay; for he both awe and fear

Commands, who hither sent me to enquire 740

What wounded man thou hast; I need not ask,

I know Machaon well, his people's guard.

My errand done, I must my message bear

Back to Achilles; and thou know'st thyself,
Thou venerable sire, how stern his mood: 745
Nay sometimes blames he, where no blame is due."

To whom Gerenian Nestor thus replied:
" Whence comes Achilles' pity for the Greeks
By Trojan weapons wounded? knows he not
What depth of suff'ring through the camp prevails? 750
How in the ships, by arrow or by spear
Sore wounded, all our best and bravest lie?
The valiant son of Tydeus, Diomed,
Pierc'd by a shaft; Ulysses by a spear,
And Agamemnon's self; Eurypylus 755
By a sharp arrow through the thigh transfix'd;
And here another, whom but now I bring,
Shot by a bow, from off the battle field:
Achilles, valiant as he is, the while
For Grecian woes nor care nor pity feels. 760
Waits he, until our ships beside the sea,
In our despite, are burnt by hostile fires,
And we be singly slain? not mine is now
The strength I boasted once of active limbs.
O that such youth and vigour yet were mine. 765

As when about a cattle-lifting raid
We fought th' Eleans; there Itymoneus
I slew, the son of brave Hyperochus,
Who dwelt in Elis; and my booty drove.
He sought to guard the herd; but from my hand 770
A jav'lin struck him in the foremost ranks:
He fell, and terror seiz'd the rustic crowd.
Abundant store of plunder from the plain
We drove; of hornèd cattle fifty herds;
As many flocks of sheep, as many droves 775
Of swine, as many wide-spread herds of goats,
And thrice so many golden-chesnut mares,
The foals of many running with their dams.
To Pylos, Neleus' city, these we drove
By night; and much it gladden'd Neleus' heart, 780
That I, though new to war, such prize had won.
When morn appear'd, the clear-voic'd heralds call'd
For all to whom from Elis debts were due;
Collected thus, the Pylians' leading men
Division made; 'for Elis ow'd us much; 785
Such wrongs we few in Pylos had sustain'd.
The might of Hercules in former years

Had storm'd our town, and all our bravest slain.
Twelve gallant sons had Neleus; I of these
Alone was left; the others all were gone. 790
Whence over-proud, th' Epeians treated us
With insult, and high-handed violence.
A herd of oxen now, and num'rous flock
Of sheep, th' old man selected for himself,
Three hundred, with their shepherds; for to him 795
Large compensation was from Elis due.
Train'd to the course, four horses, with their cars,
He for the Tripod at th' Elean games
Had sent to run; these Augeas, King of men,
Detain'd, and bade the drivers home return, 800
Bootless, and grieving for their horses' loss.
Th' old man his words resenting, and his acts,
Large spoils retain'd; the rest among the crowd
He shar'd, that none might lose his portion due.
These we dispos'd of soon, and to the Gods 805
Due off'rings made; but when the third day rose,
Back in all haste, in numbers, horse and foot,
Our foes return'd; with them the Molion twins,
Yet boys, untutor'd in the arts of war.

Far off, by Alpheus' banks, th' extremest verge 810
Of sandy Pylos, is a lofty mound,
The city of Thryum; which around, intent
To raze its walls, their army was encamp'd.
The plain already they had overspread;
When Pallas from Olympus' heights came down 815
In haste, and bade us all prepare for war.
On no unwilling ears her message fell,
But eager all for fight; but me, to arm
Neleus forbade, and ev'n my horses hid,
Deeming me yet unripe for deeds of war. 820
Yet so, albeit on foot, by Pallas' grace
A name I gain'd above our noblest horse.
There is a river, Minyis by name,
Hard by Arene, flowing to the sea,
Where we, the Pylian horse, expecting morn, 825
Encamp'd, by troops of footmen quickly join'd.
Thence in all haste advancing, all in arms,
We reach'd, by midday, Alpheus' sacred stream.
There, to o'er-ruling Jove our off'rings made,
To Alpheus and to Neptune each a bull, 830
To Pallas, blue-ey'd Maid, a heifer fair,

In order'd ranks we took our ev'ning meal,
And each in arms upon the river's brink
Lay down to rest; for close beside us lay
Th' Epeians, on the town's destruction bent. 835
Then saw they mighty deeds of war display'd;
For we, as sunlight overspread the earth,
To Jove and Pallas praying, battle gave.
But when the Pylians and th' Epeians met,
I first a warrior slew, and seiz'd his car, 840
Bold spearman, Mulius; Augeas' son-in-law,
His eldest daughter's husband, Agamede,
The yellow-hair'd, who all the virtues knew
Of each medicinal herb the wide world grows.
Him, with my brass-tipp'd spear, as on he came, 845
I slew; he fell; I, rushing to his car,
Stood 'mid the foremost ranks; th' Epeians brave
Fled diverse, when they saw their champion fall,
Chief of their horsemen, foremost in the fight.
With the dark whirlwind's force, I onward rush'd, 850
And fifty cars I took; two men in each
Fell to my spear, and bit the bloody dust.
Then Actor's sons, the Molions, had I slain,

Had not th' Earth-shaking God, their mighty sire,
Veil'd in thick cloud, withdrawn them from the field. 855
Then Jove great glory to the Pylians gave;
For o'er the wide-spread plain we held pursuit,
Slaying, and gath'ring up the scatter'd arms,
Nor till corn-clad Buprasium and the rock
Olenian, and Alesium, term'd the Mound, 860
Stay'd we our steeds; there Pallas bade us turn.
There the last man I slew, and left; the Greeks
Back from Buprasium drove their flying cars
To Pylos, magnifying all the name,
'Mid men, of Nestor, as 'mid Gods, of Jove. 865
Such once was I 'mid men, while yet I was;
Now to himself alone Achilles keeps
His valour; yet hereafter, when the Greeks
Have perish'd all, remorse shall touch his soul.
Dear friend, remember now th' injunctions giv'n 870
By old Mencetius, when from Phthian land
He sent thee forth to Agamemnon's aid:
I, and Laertes' godlike son, within,
Heard all his counsel; to the well-built house
Of Peleus we on embassy had come, 875

Throughout Achaia's fertile lands to raise
The means of war; Menœtius there we found,
Achilles, and thyself within the house;
While in the court-yard aged Peleus slew,
And to the Lord of thunder offer'd up 880
A fatten'd steer; and from a golden bowl
O'er the burnt-off'ring pour'd the ruddy wine.
We two, while ye were busied with the flesh,
Stood at the gate; surpris'd, Achilles rose,
And took us by the hand, and bade us sit, 885
Dispensing all the hospitable rites.
With food and wine recruited, I began
My speech, and urg'd ye both to join the war:
Nor were ye loth to go; much sage advice
Your elders gave; old Peleus bade his son 890
To aim at highest honours, and surpass
His comrades all; Menœtius, Actor's son,
To thee this counsel gave: 'My son,' he said,
'Achilles is by birth above thee far;
Thou art in years the elder; he in strength 895
Surpasses thee; do thou with prudent words
And timely speech address him, and advise

And guide him; he will, to his good, obey.'

"Such were the old man's words; but thou hast let
His counsel slip thy mem'ry; yet ev'n now 900
Speak to Achilles thus, and stir his soul,
If haply he will hear thee; and who knows
But by the grace of Heav'n thou mayst prevail?
For great is oft a friend's persuasive pow'r.
But if the fear of evil prophesied, 905
Or message by his Goddess-mother brought
From Jove, restrain him, let him send thee forth
With all his force of warlike Myrmidons,
That thou mayst be the saving light of Greece.
Then let him bid thee to the battle bear 910
His glitt'ring arms; if so the men of Troy,
Scar'd by his likeness, may forsake the field,
And breathing-time afford the sons of Greece,
Toil-worn; for little pause has yet been theirs.
Fresh and unwearied, ye with ease may drive 915
To their own city, from our ships and tents,
The Trojans, worn and battle-wearied men."

Thus he; Patroclus' spirit within him burn'd,
And tow'rd Achilles' tent in haste he sped.

But, running, as Ulysses' ship he pass'd, 920

Where was the Council and the Justice-seat,

And where were built the altars of the Gods,

There met him, halting from the battle-field,

Shot through the thigh, Euæmon's Heav'n-born son,

Eurypylus; his head and shoulders dank 925

With clammy sweat, while from his grievous wound

Stream'd the dark blood; yet firm was still his soul.

Mencetius' noble son with pity saw,

And deeply sorrowing thus address'd the chief:

“Woe for the chiefs and councillors of Greece! 930

And must ye, far from friends and native home,

Glut with your flesh the rav'ning dogs of Troy?

Yet tell me this, Heav'n-born Eurypylus;

Still do the Greeks 'gainst Hector's giant force

Make head? or fall they, vanquish'd by his spear?” 935

To whom with prudent speech, Eurypylus:

“No source, Heav'n-born Patroclus, have the Greeks,

Of aid, but all must perish by their ships:

For in the ships lie all our bravest late,

By spear or arrow struck, by Trojan hands: 940

And fiercer, hour by hour, their onset grows.

But save me now, and lead me to the ships;
There cut the arrow out, and from the wound
With tepid water cleanse the clotted blood:
Then soothing drugs apply, of healing pow'r, 945
Which from Achilles, thou, 'tis said, hast learn'd,
From Chiron, justest of the Centaurs, he.
For Podalirius and Machaon both,
Our leeches, one lies wounded in the tents,
Himself requiring sore the leech's aid; 950
The other on the plain still dares the fight."

To whom again Menetius' noble son:
"How may this be? say, brave Eurypylus,
What must I do? a messenger am I,
Sent by Gerenian Nestor, prop of Greece, 955
With tidings to Achilles; yet ev'n so
I will not leave thee in this weary plight."

He said, and passing his supporting hand
Beneath his breast, the wounded warrior led
Within the tent; th' attendant saw, and spread 960
The ox-hide couch; then as he lay reclin'd,
Patroclus, with his dagger, from the thigh
Cut out the biting shaft; and from the wound

With tepid water cleans'd the clotted blood;
Then, pounded in his hands, a root applied 965
Astringent, anodyne, which all his pain
Allay'd; the wound was dried, and stanch'd the blood. 967

BOOK XII.

THUS o'er the wounded chief Eurypylus

Watch'd in his tent Menœtius' noble son;
But hand to hand the Greeks and Trojans fought;
Nor longer might the ditch th' assault repel,
Nor the broad wall above, which Greeks had built, 5
To guard their ships, and round it dug the ditch;
But to the Gods no hecatombs had paid,
That they the ships and all the stores within
Might safely keep; against the will of Heav'n
The work was done, and thence not long endur'd. 10
While Hector liv'd, and Peleus' son his wrath
Retain'd, and Priam's city untaken stood;
So long the Grecian wall remain'd entire:
But of the Trojans when the best had fall'n,
Of Greeks, when some were slain, some yet surviv'd; 15
When the tenth year had seen the fall of Troy,
And Greeks, embark'd, had ta'en their homeward way,

Then Neptune and Apollo counsel took
To sap the wall by aid of all the streams
That seaward from the heights of Ida flow; 20
Rhesus, Caresus, and Heptaporus,
Granicus, and Æsepus, Rhodius,
Scamander's stream divine, and Simoïs,
Where helms and shields lay buried in the sand,
And a whole race of warrior demigods: 25
These all Apollo to one channel turn'd;
Nine days against the wall the torrent beat;
And Jove sent rain continuous, that the wall
Might sooner be submerg'd; while Neptune's self,
His trident in his hand, led on the stream, 30
Washing away the deep foundations, laid,
Laborious, by the Greeks, with logs and stones,
Now by fast-flowing Hellespont dispers'd.
The wall destroy'd, o'er all the shore he spread
A sandy drift; and bade the streams return 35
To where of old their silver waters flow'd.
Such were, in future days, to be the works
Of Neptune and Apollo; but meanwhile
Fierce rag'd the battle round the firm-built wall,

And frequent clatter'd on the turrets' beams 40
The hostile missiles: by the scourge of Jove
Subdued, the Greeks beside their ships were hemm'd,
By Hector scar'd, fell minister of Dread,
Who with the whirlwind's force, as ever, fought.
As when, by dogs and hunters circled round, 45
A boar, or lion, in his pride of strength,
Turns on his foes, while they in close array
Stand opposite, and frequent shoot their darts;
Nor yet his spirit quails, but firm he stands
With suicidal courage; swift he turns, 50
Where best to break the circling ranks; where'er
He makes his rush, the circling ranks give way:
So Hector, here and there, amid the crowd,
Urg'd his companions on to cross the ditch:
The fiery steeds shrank back, and, snorting, stood 55
Upon the topmost brink; for the wide ditch
Withheld them, easy nor to leap nor cross:
For steep arose on either side the banks,
And at the top with sharpen'd stakes were crown'd,
Thick-set and strong, which there the sons of Greece 60
Had plant'd, to repel th' invading foes.

Scarce might a horse, with well-wheel'd car attach'd,
Essay the passage; but on foot they burn'd
To make th' attempt; and thus Polydamas,
Approaching near, to valiant Hector spoke: 65

“Hector, and all ye other chiefs of Troy,
And brave Allies, in vain we seek to drive
Our horses o'er the ditch; 'tis hard to cross;
'Tis crown'd with pointed stakes, and them behind
Is built the Grecian wall; there to descend 70

And from our cars in narrow space to fight
Were certain ruin. If it be indeed
The will of Jove, high-thund'ring, to confound
The Greeks in utter rout, and us to aid,
I should rejoice that ev'ry Greek forthwith 75

Far from his home should fill a nameless grave;
But should they turn, and we again be driv'n
Back from the ships, and hurried down the ditch,
Such were our loss, that scarce a messenger
Would live to bear the tidings to the town 80
Of our destruction by the rallied Greeks.

Hear then my counsel; let us all agree
With our attendants here upon the bank

To leave our horses ; and ourselves on foot,
All arm'd, press on where Hector leads ; the Greeks, 85
If that their doom be nigh, will make no stand."

Thus spoke Polydamas ; his counsel pleas'd ;
And Hector sprang, in arms, from off his car ;
Nor long, the noble Hector when they saw,
Delay'd the other chiefs ; then gave command 90
Each to his own attendant, by the ditch
To keep the chariots all in due array ;
Then parting, form'd in order of attack,
In five divisions, with their sev'ral chiefs.
Round Hector throng'd, and bold Polydamas, 95
The best and bravest ; they who long'd the most
To storm the wall, and fight beside the ships.
With them Cebriones ; for Hector left,
To guard the horses, one of lesser note.
The next division was by Paris led, 100
Agenor, and Alcatheus ; the third
By Helenus, and brave Deiphobus,
Two sons of Priam ; Asius was the third,
Asius, the son of Hyrtacus ; who brought
His tow'ring fiery steeds from Selles' stream, 105

Hard by Arisba ; stout Æneas led
The fourth, Anchises' son, Archilochus
With him, and Acamas, Antenor's sons ;
Both skill'd alike in ev'ry point of war.
Of the far-fam'd Allies, Sarpedon held 110
The chief command ; and for his comrades chose
Asteropæus, and the warlike might
Of Glaucus ; these o'er all the rest he held
Pre-eminent in valour, save himself,
Who o'er them all superior stood confess'd. 115
These, interlac'd their shields of tough bull's-hide,
With eager step advanc'd, and deem'd the Greeks
Would, unresisting, fall before their ships.
The other Trojans and renown'd Allies
The words of wise Polydamas obey'd : 120
But Asius, son of Hyrtacus, refus'd
His horses and his charioteer to leave,
With them advancing to assail the ships.
Blind fool, unconscious ! from before those ships,
Escap'd from death, with horses and with car 125
Triumphant, to the breezy heights of Troy
He never shall return ; ill-omen'd fate

O'ershadowing, dooms him by the spear to fall
Of brave Idomeneus, Deucalion's son.
He tow'rd the left inclin'd, what way the Greeks 130
With horse and chariot from the plain return'd.
That way he drove his horses; and the gates
Unguarded found by bolt or massive bar.
Their warders held them open'd wide, to save
Perchance some comrade, flying from the plain. 135
Thither he bent his course; with clamours loud
Follow'd his troops; nor deem'd they that the Greeks
Would hold their ground, but fall amid their ships.
Little they knew; before the gates they found
Two men, two warriors of the prime, two sons 140
Illustrious of the spear-skill'd Lapithæ:
Stout Polypoetes one, Pirithōus' son,
With whom Leonteus, bold as blood-stain'd Mars:
So stood these two before the lofty gates,
As on the mountain side two tow'ring oaks, 145
Which many a day have borne the wind and storm,
Firm rifted by their strong continuous roots:
So in their arms and vigour confident
Those two great Asius' charge, undaunted, met.

On th' other side, with shouts and wild uproar, 150
Their bull's-hide shields uplifted high, advanc'd
Against the well-built wall, Asius the King,
Iamenus, Orestes, Acamas
The son of Asius, and Enomäus,
And Thöon; those within to save the ships 155
Calling meanwhile on all the well-greav'd Greeks;
But when they saw the wall by Trojans scal'd,
And heard the cry of Greeks in panic fear,
Sprang forth those two, before the gates to fight.
As when two boars, upon the mountain side, 160
Await th' approaching din of men and dogs,
Then sideways rushing, snap the wood around,
Ripp'd from the roots; loud clash their clattring tusks,
Till to the huntsman's spear they yield their lives;
So clatter'd on those champions' brass-clad breasts 165
The hostile weapons; stubbornly they fought,
Relying on their strength, and friends above:
For from the well-built tow'rs huge stones were hurl'd
By those who for themselves, their tents and ships,
Maintain'd defensive warfare; thick they fell, 170
As wintry snow-flakes, which the boist'rous wind,

Driving the shadowy clouds, spreads fast and close
O'er all the surface of the fertile earth :
So thick, from Grecian and from Trojan hands,
The weapons flew ; on helm and bossy shield 175
With grating sound the pond'rous masses rang.
Then deeply groaning, as he smote his thigh
Thus spoke dismay'd the son of Hyrtacus :
“ O Father Jove, how hast thou lov'd our hopes
To falsify, who deem'd not that the Greeks 180
Would stand our onset, and resistless arms !
But they, as yellow-banded wasps, or bees,
That by some rocky pass have built their nests,
Abandon not their cavern'd home, but wait
Th' attack, and boldly for their offspring fight ; 185
So from the gates these two, though two alone,
Retire not, till they be or ta'en or slain.”

He said : but Jove regarded not his words ;
So much on Hector's triumph he was bent.
Like battle rag'd round th' other gates ; but hard 190
It were for me, with godlike pow'r, to paint
Each sev'ral combat ; for around the wall
A more than human storm of stone was pour'd

On ev'ry side ; the Greeks, hard press'd, perforce
Fought for their ships, while all the Gods look'd on 195
Indignant, who the Grecian cause upheld.
Fiercely the Lapithæ sustain'd the war :
Stout Polypoetes first, Pirithôus' son,
Smote, through the brass-cheek'd helmet, Damachus ;
Nor stay'd the brazen helm the spear, whose point 200
Went crashing through the bone, that all the brain
Was shatter'd ; onward as he rush'd, he fell.
Then Pylon next, and Ormenus he slew :
Meantime Leonteus, scion true of Mars,
Struck with unerring spear Hippomachus, 205
Son of Antimachus, below the waist ;
Then, drawing from the sheath his trenchant sword,
Dash'd through the crowd, and hand to hand he smote
Antiphates ; he, backward, fell to earth.
Menon, Iamenus, Orestes next, 210
In quick succession to the ground he brought.
From these while they their glitt'ring armour stripp'd,
Round Hector throng'd, and bold Polydamas,
The bravest and the best, who long'd the most
To storm the wall, and burn with fire the ships. 215

Yet on the margin of the ditch they paus'd;
For, as they sought to cross, a sign from Heav'n
Appear'd, to leftward of th' astonish'd crowd;
A soaring eagle in his talons bore
A dragon, huge of size, of blood-red hue, 220
Alive, and breathing still, nor yet subdued;
For twisting backward through the breast he pierc'd
His bearer, near the neck; he, stung with pain,
Let fall his prey, which dropp'd amid the crowd;
Then screaming, on the blast was borne away. 225
The Trojans, shudd'ring, in their midst beheld
The spotted serpent, dire portent of Jove:
Then to bold Hector thus Polydamas:
"Hector, in council thou reprov'st me oft
For good advice; it is not meet, thou say'st, 230
That private men should talk beside the mark,
In council or in war, but study still
Thine honour to exalt; yet must I now
Declare what seems to me the wisest course:
Let us not fight the Greeks beside their ships; 235
For thus I read the future, if indeed
To us, about to cross, this sign from Heav'n

Was sent, to leftward of th' astonish'd crowd :
A soaring eagle, bearing in his claws
A dragon, huge of size, of blood-red hue, 240
Alive ; yet dropp'd him ere he reach'd his home,
Nor to his nestlings bore th' intended prey :
So we, ev'n though our mighty strength should break
The gates and wall, and put the Greeks to rout,
By the same road not scatheless should return, 245
But many a Trojan on the field should leave,
Slain by the Greeks, while they their ships defend.
So would a seer, well vers'd in augury,
Worthy of public credit, read this sign."

To whom thus Hector of the glancing helm 250
Replied, with stern regard : " Polydamas,
This speech of thine is alien to my soul :
Thy better judgment better counsel knows.
But if in earnest such is thine advice,
Thee of thy senses have the Gods bereft, 255
Who fain wouldst have us disregard the word
And promise by the nod of Jove confirm'd,
And put our faith in birds' expanded wings ;
Little of these I reckon, nor care to look,

If to the right, and tow'rd the morning sun, 260

Or to the left, and shades of night, they fly.

Put we our trust in Jove's eternal will,

Of mortals and Immortals King supreme.

The best of omens is our country's cause.

Why shouldst thou tremble at the battle strife? 265

Though ev'ry Trojan else were doom'd to die

Beside the ships, no fear lest thou shouldst fall:

Unwarlike is thy soul, nor firm of mood:

But if thou shrink, or by thy craven words

Turn back another Trojan from the fight, 270

My spear shall take the forfeit of thy life."

This said, he led the way; with joyous shouts

They follow'd all; then Jove, the lightning's Lord,

From Ida's heights a storm of wind sent down,

Driving the dust against the Grecian ships; 275

Which quell'd their courage, and to Hector gave,

And to the Trojans, fresh incitement; they,

On their own strength, and heav'nly signs relying,

Their force address'd to storm the Grecian wall.

They raz'd the countersearp, the battlements 280

Destroy'd; and the projecting buttresses,

Which, to sustain the tow'rs, the Greeks had fix'd
Deep in the soil, with levers undermin'd.
These once withdrawn, they hop'd to storm the wall;
Nor from the passage yet the Greeks withdrew, 285
But closely fencing with their bull's-hide shields
The broken battlements, they thence hurl'd down
A storm of weapons on the foe beneath.
Commanding from the tow'r in ev'ry place
Were seen th' Ajaces, urging to the fight, 290
Imploring these, and those in sterner tones
Rebuking, who their warlike toil relax'd.

“ Friends, Grecians all, ye who excel in war,
And ye of mod'rate or inferior strength,
Though all are not with equal pow'rs endued, 295
Yet here is work for all! bear this in mind,
Nor tow'rd the ships let any turn his face,
By threats dismay'd; but forward press; and each
Encourage each, if so the lightning's Lord,
Olympian Jove, may grant us to repel, 300
And backward to his city chase the foe.”

Thus they, with cheering words, sustain'd the war:
Thick as the snow-flakes on a wintry day,

When Jove, the Lord of counsel, down on men
His snow-storm sends, and manifests his pow'r: 305
Hush'd are the winds; the flakes continuous fall,
That the high mountain tops, and jutting crags,
And lotus-cover'd meads are buried deep,
And man's productive labours of the field;
On hoary Ocean's beach and bays they lie, 310
Th' approaching waves their bound; o'er all beside
Is spread by Jove the heavy veil of snow.
So thickly flew the stones from either side,
By Greeks on Trojans hurl'd, by these on Greeks;
And clatter'd loud through all its length the wall. 315
Nor yet the Trojans, though by Hector led,
The gates had broken, and the massive bar,
But Jove against the Greeks sent forth his son
Sarpedon, as a lion on a herd:
His shield's broad orb before his breast he bore, 320
Well-wrought, of beaten brass, which th' arm'rer's hand
Had beaten out, and lin'd with stout bull's-hide;
With golden rods, continuous, all around;
He thus equipp'd, two jav'lins brandishing,
Strode onward, as a lion, mountain-bred. 325

Whom, fasting long, his dauntless courage leads
To assail the flock, though in well-guarded fold;
And though the shepherds there he find, prepar'd
With dogs and lances to protect the sheep,
Not unattempted will he leave the fold; 330
But, springing to the midst, he bears his prey
In triumph thence; or in the onset falls,
Wounded by jav'lines hurl'd by stalwart hands:
So, prompted by his godlike courage, burn'd
Sarpedon to assail the lofty wall, 335
And storm the ramparts; and to Glaucus thus,
Son of Hippolochus, his speech address'd:
 "Whence is it, Glaucus, that in Lycian land
We two at feasts the foremost seats may claim,
The largest portions, and the fullest cups? 340
Why held as Gods in honour? why endow'd
With ample heritage, by Xanthus' banks,
Of vineyard, and of wheat-producing land?
Then by the Lycians should we not be seen
The foremost to affront the raging fight? 345
So may our well-arm'd Lycians make their boast;
'To no inglorious Kings we Lycians owe

Allegiance; they on richest viands feed;
Of luscious flavour drink the choicest wine;
But still their valour brightest shows; and they, 350
Where Lycians war, are foremost in the fight!
O friend! if we, survivors of this war,
Could live, from age and death for ever free,
Thou shouldst not see me foremost in the fight,
Nor would I urge thee to the glorious field: 355
But since on man ten thousand forms of death
Attend, which none may 'scape, then on, that we
May glory on others gain, or they on us!"

Thus he; nor Glaucus from his bidding shrank;
And forward straight they led the Lycian pow'rs. 360
Menestheus, son of Petëus, with dismay
Observ'd their movement; for on his command,
Inspiring terror, their attack was made.
He look'd around him to the Grecian tow'rs,
If any chief might there be found, to save 365
His comrades from destruction; there he saw,
Of war insatiable, th' Ajaces twain;
And Teucer, from the tent but newly come,
Hard by; nor yet could reach them with his voice;

Such was the din, such tumult rose to Heav'n, 370
From clatt'ring shields, and horsehair-crested helms,
And batter'd gates, now all at once assail'd:
Before them fiercely strove th' assaulting bands
To break their way; he then Thoötes sent,
His herald, to th' Ajaces, craving aid. 375

"Haste thee, Thoötes, on th' Ajaces call,
On both, 'twere better; so we best may hope
To 'scape the death, which else is near at hand:
So fierce the pressure of the Lycian chiefs,
Undaunted now, as ever, in the fight. 380
But if they too are hard'ly press'd, at least
Let Ajax, son of Telamon, be spar'd,
And with him Teucer, skill'd to draw the bow."
He said; the herald heard, and straight obey'd;
Along the wall, where stood the brass-clad Greeks, 385
He ran, and standing near th' Ajaces, said:

"Ajaces, leaders of the brass-clad Greeks,
The son of Heav'n-born Petöus craves your aid,
To share awhile the labours of his guard;
Both, if it may be; so he best may hope 390
To 'scape the death, which else is near at hand:

So fierce the pressure of the Lycian chiefs,

Undaunted now, as ever, in the fight.

But if ye too are hardly press'd, at least

Let Ajax, son of Telamon, be spar'd, 395

And with him Teucer, skill'd to draw the bow."

He said: the mighty son of Telamon

Consenting, thus address'd Oileus' son:

"Ajax, do thou and valiant Lycomede

Exhort the Greeks the struggle to maintain; 400

While I go yonder, to affront the war,

To aid their need, and back return in haste."

Thus saying, Ajax Telamon set forth,

And with him Teucer went, his father's son,

While by Pandion Teucer's bow was borne. 405

At brave Menestheus' tow'r, within the wall,

Arriv'd, sore press'd they found the garrison;

For like a whirlwind on the ramparts pour'd

The Lycians' valiant councillors and chiefs.

They quickly join'd the fray, and loud arose 410

The battle-cry; first Ajax Telamon

Sarpedon's comrade, brave Epicles, slew,

Struck by a rugged stone, within the wall

Which lay, the topmost of the parapet,
Of size prodigious; which with both his hands 415
A man in youth's full vigour scarce could raise,
As men are now; he lifted it on high,
And downward hurl'd; the four-peak'd helm it br
Crushing the bone, and shatt'ring all the skull;
He, like a diver, from the lofty tow'r 420
Fell headlong down, and life forsook his bones.
Teucer, meanwhile, from off the lofty wall
The valiant Glaucus, pressing to the fight,
Struck with an arrow, where he saw his arm
Unguarded; he no longer brook'd the fray; 425
Back from the wall he sprang, in hopes to hide
From Grecian eyes his wound, that none might see,
And triumph o'er him with insulting words.
With grief Sarpedon saw his friend withdraw,
Yet not relax'd his efforts; Thestor's son, 430
Alemaon, with his spear he stabb'd, and back
The weapon drew; he, following, prostrate fell,
And loudly rang his arms of polish'd brass.
Then at the parapet, with stalwart hand,
Sarpedon tugg'd; and yielding to his force

Down fell the block entire; the wall laid bare,
To many at once the breach gave open way.
Ajax and Teucer him at once assail'd;
This with an arrow struck the glitt'ring belt
Around his breast, whence hung his pond'rous shield; 440
But Jove, who will'd not that his son should fall
Before the ships, the weapon turn'd aside.

Then forward Ajax sprang, and with his spear
Rust at the shield; the weapon pass'd not through,
Yet check'd his bold advance; a little space 445
Back he recoil'd, but not the more withdrew,
His soul on glory intent; and rallying quick,
Thus to the warlike Lycians shouted loud:

“Why, Lycians, thus your wonted might relax?
’Tis hard for one alone, how brave soe’er, 450
Ev’n though he break the rampart down, to force
A passage to the ships; but on with me!
For work is here for many hands to do.”

He said; and by the King’s rebuke abash’d,
With fiercer zeal the Lycians press’d around 455
Their King and councillor; on th’ other side
Within the wall the Greeks their squadrons mass’d;

Then were great deeds achiev'd; nor through the breach
Could the brave troops of Lycia to the ships
Their passage force; nor could the warrior Greeks
Repel the Lycians from the ground, where they,
Before the wall, had made their footing good.
As when two neighbours, in a common field,
Each line in hand, within a narrow space,
About the limits of their land contend;
Between them thus the rampart drew the line;
O'er which the full-orb'd shields of tough bull-hide,
And lighter bucklers on the warriors' breasts
On either side they clove; and many a wound
The pitiless weapons dealt, on some who, turn'd,
Their neck and back laid bare; on many more
Who full in front, and through their shields were struck.
On ev'ry side the parapet and tow'rs
With Greek and Trojan blood were spatter'd o'er.
Nor yet, ev'n so, the Greeks to flight were driv'n:
But as a woman that for wages spins,
Honest and true, with wool and weights in hand,
In even balance holds the scales, to mete
Her humble hire, her children's maintenance;

So even hung the balance of the war, 480
Till Jove with highest honour Hector crown'd,
The son of Priam; he, the foremost, scal'd
The wall, and loudly on the Trojans call'd:

“On, valiant Trojans, on! the Grecian wall
Break down, and wrap their ships in blazing fires.” 485

Thus he, exhorting, spoke; they heard him all,
And to the wall rush'd numberless, and swarm'd
Upon the ramparts, bristling thick with spears.
Then Hector, stooping, seiz'd a pond'rous stone
That lay before the gates; 'twas broad below, 490
But sharp above; and scarce two lab'ring men,
The strongest, from the ground could raise it up,
And load upon a wain; as men are now;
But he unaided lifted it with ease,
So light it seem'd, by grace of Saturn's son. 495
As in one hand a shepherd bears with ease
A full-siz'd fleece, and scarcely feels the weight;
So Hector tow'rd the portals bore the stone,
Which clos'd the lofty double-folding gates,
Within defended by two massive bars 500
Laid crosswise, and with one cross bolt secur'd.

Close to the gate he stood; and planting firm
His foot, to give his arm its utmost pow'r,
Full on the middle dash'd the mighty mass.
The hinges both gave way; the pond'rous stor
Fell inwards; widely gap'd the op'ning gates;
Nor might the bars within the blow sustain:
This way and that the several portals flew
Before the crashing missile; dark as night
His low'ring brow, great Hector sprang within.
Bright flash'd the brazen armour on his breast
As through the gates, two jav'lins in his hand.
He sprang; the Gods except, no pow'r might meet
That onset; blaz'd his eyes with lurid fire.
Then to the Trojans, turning to the throng,
He call'd aloud to scale the lofty wall;
They heard, and straight obey'd; some scal'd the wall;
Some through the strong-built gates continuous pour'd;
While in confusion irretrievable
Fled to their ships the panic-stricken Greeks.

END OF VOL. I.

